

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

Wednesday, October 30, 1963.

The SPEAKER (Hon. T. C. Stott) took the Chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

QUESTIONS.**RESERVE BANK BUILDING.**

Mr. FRANK WALSH: In view of a statement in this morning's press about the Reserve Bank building, if he cannot supply information now will the Premier ascertain whether local or imported marble is to be used in that building?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I presume that the object of the question is to ascertain whether locally produced marble can be used. If so, it would be useful if the Leader could supply me with information concerning the type of marble available and the price at which it could be procured so that I would have something more than a vague inquiry to put to the Chairman of the Reserve Bank. If I can set out what we have to offer it will probably be much better than merely asking what material is to be used with the object of complaining if it is not South Australian material.

SOUTH-EAST DEVELOPMENT.

Mr. HARDING: Recently district councils of the Lower South-East District Councils Association met and discussed the question of developing the South-East and the hinterland of the western districts of Victoria, including Portland. I understand that South-Eastern councils, corporations and primary producers' organizations have been invited to contribute towards this development, particularly the development of Portland, and that one council has made contributions. The Minister of Local Government is aware of the situation. Will the Minister of Works get a report and make it available to members?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes. The honourable member was good enough to put a note in my bag, I think last week, drawing attention to this matter. I passed on his information to my colleague with whom I had informal discussions about the implications of that information. I know that the Minister of Local Government is actively considering the matter. As soon as he has come to a conclusion, and Cabinet has considered the matter, I shall be able to answer the honourable member further.

WHEAT STABILIZATION.

Mr. HUTCHENS: An article in this morning's *Advertiser*, headed "Warnings on Wheat", states:

Any attempt to curtail Australian wheat production by offering growers less for their wheat would finally reduce them to the state of peasantry found in most under-developed countries, the annual conference of the Australian Primary Producers' Union was told today.

The article warned that there had never been a clear statement on whether wheatgrowers should or should not curtail production. As this industry is most important to the economy of the country, will the Minister of Agriculture say whether he considers the industry need have any fears regarding this press statement?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: As honourable members know, the Government strongly favours the continued stabilization of the wheat industry, and indeed the Opposition also supports it. At present there is notice of a Bill to be introduced shortly to provide for the continuation of the stabilization scheme which will, in effect, carry on the Government's policy. The sale of wheat in overseas countries is handled by the Australian Wheat Board, and those sales in the last few years have been comparatively good. I suppose that nobody can tell just what the future holds, but I know of no reason to assume that the wheat market will collapse. At the present time the position is fairly satisfactory.

HOUSING STATISTICS.

Mr. COUMBE: Did the Premier read in the press yesterday that the Commonwealth Statistician had indicated that the applications for new houses and flats in the quarter just ended had increased remarkably and that the number was the highest ever recorded in Australia? In view of the tremendous upsurge of building of houses and flats in South Australia at present, can the Premier say whether these figures reflect the position in this State, and will he obtain the South Australian figures in this regard?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will obtain a report so that the honourable member will have the South Australian figures, which I have been told constitute a record. I think that one should always use discretion in interpreting such figures, because applications often come through in batches and a batch may fall within one quarter and raise the figures for that quarter considerably, perhaps at the expense of the subsequent quarter when a batch

is not handed over to the Housing Trust. I believe that the figures generally for South Australia have been remarkably high.

SOLDIER SETTLEMENT.

Mr. CORCORAN: My question concerns the committee appointed by the Minister of Repatriation to investigate the problems of soldier settlers in the South-East. Recently I received a letter from the secretary of the committee formed by these settlers—known as the South-Eastern Soldier Settlers Investigation Committee—expressing concern about the delay by the committee appointed by the Minister in bringing down its report. Can the Minister say when this report is likely to be received by him so that I can pass this information on?

The Hon. P. H. QUIRKE: First, there has been no delay in the furnishing of the report; the evidence has not been completed. As honourable members and, I think, the settlers were aware, one member of that committee was acting on two committees at the same time. Both committees were important and both called for the same urgency. The evidence will soon be completed. The date of the committee's furnishing me with a report is in its own hands, but it knows that I want it expeditiously, if possible.

EGG MARKETING.

Mr. LAUCKE: Has the Minister of Agriculture yet received from the Minister for Primary Industry in Canberra details of the proposed egg industry stabilization plan, and will he consider holding a poll of South Australian egg producers to determine their wishes regarding the implementation of the proposed plan?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I have not received more information from the Minister for Primary Industry regarding the proposed egg industry stabilization plan than has been published frequently for some months, and I have not yet received a copy of the Bill which, I believe, the Minister is preparing for the Commonwealth Parliament and which I do not doubt he will forward shortly, so in neither case have I full details. The holding of a poll is well worth considering. However, this is a somewhat hypothetical question, because it would be difficult to phrase the question actually at issue. Nevertheless, Government policy generally is not to introduce a stabilization plan dealing with primary products except at the wish of the producers, and that is its policy in this case. Whether it will be necessary to hold a poll to determine that wish can be decided only after further details have been received.

MANNUM SEWERAGE.

Mr. BYWATERS: Can the Minister of Works indicate the priority of the township of Mannum for sewerage?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: I have investigated the matter, and the Engineer-in-Chief reports:

Country towns have been divided into 13 priority groups for the purpose of assessing their claims to sewerage schemes.

These priorities were decided by a committee which was appointed several years ago and which is still operating and it is the committee's determination I quote. The report continues:

There are 18 towns in priority groups 1, 2 and 3. Some of these schemes have been completed and others are under construction. Together with other River Murray towns, Mannum is in priority group 4. The date of commencement of the Mannum scheme will depend upon the rate of progress on towns in the first three groups and this in turn will depend upon the finance available for country sewerage as a whole.

WHYALLA LAND.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Has the Minister of Lands a reply to my recent question concerning land prices at Whyalla?

The Hon. P. H. QUIRKE: The Land Board reports:

Allotments 2293 to 2296, town of Whyalla, have been gazetted open to application for residential purposes at a price of £350 each with a footnote that an application from the South Australian Housing Trust would receive favourable consideration by the board. These allotments are situated in Gowrie Avenue and are located very much nearer the business portions of the town than the allotments in the western portion of Whyalla, which is now in course of development. The allotments in the western portion of the town have been made available by the department at prices ranging from £245 to £260 per lot, including the cost of roads, etc. Over recent years the board has received many inquiries for blocks in the central and eastern part of the town. Many applicants have stated that they do not desire to live out in the western end and have preferred to wait for blocks in the more favourably situated parts to become available. The board considers that, where blocks do become available in the more advantageous and developed areas, the purchasers should be required to pay more than the prices paid for less favourable blocks. The prices set for allotments 2293/6 are below those being asked by private individuals for allotments similarly situated.

The sites to be offered for motel purposes and ambulance station are business sites which, under the Crown Lands Act, have to be offered at auction. In setting the upset prices, the board endeavours to fix a figure which will have some relationship to the price eventually received. Where an upset price is set at a

nominal figure for land which at sale realizes a price double or treble the amount set, considerable time is wasted at the auction and the bidding is intensified by the fact there will almost certainly be a greater number of bidders in the opening stages at least. An example of the effect of offering land at low upset prices occurred in Whyalla in 1962. Six allotments were offered for business purposes at an upset price of £400 each, and in addition another block was offered for petrol station purposes at £2,000.

A total of £6,385 was received for the six business sites (total upset price £2,400) and the sale of these blocks involved a total of 429 bids. The petrol station site sold for £15,000, which figure was reached after 51 bids. These 51 bids took six minutes, which means that the time taken to sell seven blocks of vacant land was more than one hour. In addition to the time wasted at the auction, the setting of very low upset prices at auction could result in the board being charged that it was not satisfactorily safeguarding the Government's equity in the land offered. Under the existing provisions of the Act, no limit can be placed on the prices bid at auction, and, unless it is a matter of policy that the upset prices be on a minimum basis, the board considers that it should in all such cases fix the upset price on the same basis as that adopted by private land-owners and agents.

That is a lengthy report, but it is so important in relation to land sales that I think the House for allowing me to read it in its entirety.

PORT PIRIE WEST SCHOOL.

Mr. McKEE: Will the Minister of Works say whether tenders have been called for the drainage and paving scheme at the Port Pirie West Primary School, which work I consider to be urgent? The playing grounds are in a deplorable condition; the water pipes are exposed to the sun, and the children are unable to get a drink of cool water. Because of this, will the Minister treat the matter as urgent?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: Yes. From memory, I think that when I replied to the honourable member last week or late in the previous week I was able to say that tenders would be called shortly. I have not seen the tenders, but I will inquire again. This is an urgent matter, and is being treated as such.

PETERBOROUGH HIGH SCHOOL.

Mr. CASEY: In July of this year I asked the Minister of Education a question about new toilet facilities at the Peterborough High School. I had referred to the Education Department certain alterations that should be made to this toilet block, and those suggestions were accepted by the department. When the Minister answered my question he said that sketch plans for the new scheme had been drawn and that estimates were being prepared.

Will the Minister obtain information about this toilet block scheme?

The Hon. Sir BADEN PATTINSON: Yes.

SITTINGS.

Mr. HEASLIP: As the Commonwealth elections will be held four weeks next Saturday, has the Premier any information about the intended sittings of this House?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Some time ago the Leader of the Opposition asked a similar question, and I stated then that I would be willing to discuss the matter and make a statement. I have discussed the matter with several honourable members and have considered it in conjunction with the amount of business before the House and the amount still to be introduced. I suggest to honourable members that the House do not adjourn for the Commonwealth elections, but that when the leaders or deputy leaders of the Parties address meetings in the metropolitan area, the House adjourn for that evening, and that honourable members desiring to attend the meetings to support their respective viewpoints, rely on the House's not sitting. This arrangement would apply for one meeting each in South Australia. The Government desires that the sittings of the House do not continue beyond the end of November but, if our work is not completed then, honourable members might consider returning at the end of February for two or three weeks before the Festival of Arts to finalize outstanding matters. That would not be a new session but a continuation of the present one, so that prorogation would take place after those sittings. The usual Address in Reply debate session would be held in July. If this suggestion meets honourable members' requirements, I think that it would be the best way of dealing with this matter.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: I admit that I have not been able to speak with the Premier about this matter this week, but I am not satisfied for the House to remain sitting until November 28. In view of the matters I referred to earlier I think that in fairness members should have some time free to campaign prior to the Commonwealth election. We are entitled to have the last week of November entirely free. This would give us seven or eight days in which to do the work we want to do. I am prepared to come back here and resume sittings on the Tuesday after the election and, if necessary, to resume sitting again in March next year. As my Party has given, and is giving, careful attention to the legislation placed before the House I think that the

Premier should agree, on reflection, to adjourning the House for the last week of November to enable members to campaign.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I will examine the question and inform the Leader later.

GLOSSOP DRAINAGE.

Mr. CURREN: In June this year the Minister of Irrigation visited my district and several matters, including drainage in the township of Glossop, were brought to his notice. I understand the Minister has a report on that project.

The Hon. P. H. QUIRKE: As the report is lengthy I shall not read all of it, but the honourable member can have it to peruse. It is not necessary to have the whole of it printed in *Hansard*. The Berri council now desires that the Government accept responsibility for meeting part or all of the cost of pumping seepage water from the town of Glossop. Following my discussion with members of a deputation at Glossop on June 18 last the Engineer-in-Chief has been asked to comment on (1) the practicability of effecting further improvements in the conditions in the vicinity of the caisson in section 525; (2) the estimated cost of any scheme or schemes which could be considered; and (3) whether any improvements could be effected in the scheme for dewatering the town of Glossop and, if so, the estimated cost of installation and operation. The Resident Engineer (Berri) has not yet been able to carry out the necessary investigation and preparation of estimates which would enable the Engineer-in-Chief to comply with the department's request. In the meanwhile, surface water has drained away from section 525 and the caisson facilities are handling seepage water offering without any difficulty. However, it is understood that the water table in the town of Glossop itself has receded very little. The honourable member will realize that the department is sympathetic to the request. Originally the council agreed to undertake the whole of the cost but I believe that the cost has become so prohibitive that it wants to be relieved of at least part of this cost. The investigation is now proceeding with the idea of relieving the council of the whole or part of the cost.

GOODWOOD ROAD.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Last Wednesday I asked the Minister of Works, representing the Minister of Roads, a question about the reinstatement of Goodwood Road. I understand he has a reply.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: My colleague, the Minister of Roads, states that at present Goodwood Road is a district road and the responsibility of the local authorities. It is therefore lower in priority for reconstruction than some of the other main and district roads in the metropolitan area that carry through traffic in addition to local traffic. However, in forward planning it is proposed to extend Goodwood Road to Ayliffe Road to join up with the South Road, when it will become a through road. For that reason it is proposed, as soon as practicable, to make a survey of Goodwood Road and prepare plans for reconstruction, but at this stage it is not practicable to indicate when pressure of work or finance will permit this to be undertaken.

FREE BUS PLAN.

Mr. FRED WALSH: On October 9 I asked the Premier a question about the proposal by certain city stores to institute a free bus service from the Keswick bridge to the city. My question related to the need to have a permit from the Transport Control Board, and the protection that would be assured users of the service in the event of death or injury as a result of an accident involving one of these vehicles. Has the Premier information on this matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I do not have details for the honourable member today, but my colleague, the Minister of Works, who would be handling this matter, said that it was the subject of a Crown Solicitor's report. I will obtain that report and hope to have it available for the honourable member tomorrow.

SOUTH ROAD SCHOOL CROSSING.

Mr. LANGLEY: I believe the Minister of Works has an answer from the Minister of Roads to the question I asked recently about pedestrian crossing lights at South Road, Black Forest.

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: My colleague, the Minister of Roads, states that the matter of providing additional warning for pedestrian-actuated lights is a matter for the local government authorities at specific locations and for the Road Traffic Board from the over-all point of view. The matter of motorists' ignoring the traffic lights results from many factors and the installation of an overhead mast arm will not necessarily alleviate the problem. The board has been investigating this problem at the location in question and at all other locations where pedestrian-actuated lights are installed and it is contemplating a modified

layout of the crossing incorporating, perhaps, more restrictive parking control in an effort to obtain better motorist behaviour. At the particular location in question the crossing is the concern of both the Marion and Unley councils. The board will undertake to contact both councils and investigate the matter in conjunction with them.

EUDUNDA-AUBURN ROAD.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Has the Minister of Works a reply to my recent question about the sealing of the Eudunda-Auburn road?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: My colleague, the Minister of Roads, informs me that it is expected that the remaining 5½ miles of the Marrabel-Saddleworth main road No. 129 will be sealed this summer. Subject to funds being available, the Saddleworth District Council should commence on the remaining 5 miles of the Eudunda-Marrabel main road next financial year, probably completing it in two years. Following this, the councils of Saddleworth and Upper Wakefield would both work on the Auburn-Saddleworth section, which could be completed during 1967-68.

SPEAKER'S CASTING VOTES.

Mr. LAWN: My question arises out of a reply you gave to a question I asked yesterday, Mr. Speaker, when you said that I would find you to be one of the most impartial Speakers ever in this House. I was greatly alarmed when you said that, because when I am explaining Parliament to people I do my best to explain the impartiality of the Chair. I was alarmed to think that I must have misunderstood what the word "impartial" meant, so I consulted Murray's *Oxford Dictionary* which defines it as meaning "not favouring one party or side". The same dictionary defines "favour" as meaning "something conceded, conferred or done out of special grace or goodwill; an act of exceptional kindness as opposed to one of duty or justice". In view of those definitions do you, Mr. Speaker, maintain that you are one of the most impartial Speakers ever or do you contend that Murray's *Oxford Dictionary* is wrong in those definitions?

The SPEAKER: I do not know whether the honourable member is wrong or not, but I point out to him that I am not responsible to him for the way I vote in this Chamber. It is not my intention, if the occasion does arise, to disfranchise the district that I have the honour to represent in Parliament. On every occasion when it is my duty to give a ruling in this House I consult precedents. If the honourable

member takes the trouble to look up the precedents he will find that every ruling I have given has been based on previous precedent and, therefore, is as impartial as it is possible to be. The honourable member will also realize that during my occupancy of this Chair I have been very kind and generous in every possible way to the honourable member and other members of his Party as well as to the Government Party, and I hope to so continue to the best of my ability.

As far as the *status quo* is concerned—and I think this is the point that the honourable member is really worrying himself about, and there is no need for him to do so—there is not much difference in whether a Bill is defeated on the second reading or on the third reading because the *status quo* remains. So, why the honourable member is worrying I would not know, nor would anyone else.

Mr. LAWN: A compromise might be reached in Committee if members had an opportunity for discussion.

WILD LIFE RESERVE.

Mr. NANKIVELL: I understand that section 1 in the hundred of Messent has recently been declared a national reserve. Can the Minister of Lands say whether this is so and what are the circumstances in which this decision was reached?

The Hon. P. H. QUIRKE: This area was held by Dr. Michael Schneider whose licence will expire on November 9. He submitted this block—section 1, hundred of Messent—comprising 24,000 acres back to the Land Board which recommended that it be dedicated as a national park and wild life reserve. I have now had it so dedicated, and Dr. Schneider has expressed his pleasure at the decision.

FRUIT CANNING.

Mr. BYWATERS: The Premier is aware that negotiations are proceeding to have a levy of 2s. a dozen cans imposed on all preserved fruit sold with the object of stabilizing the industry. I understand that last evening legislation was approved in the Commonwealth Parliament for this levy to be applied immediately. I have been told that this morning an officer of the Customs Department visited a Murray Bridge cannery and took an inventory of all stock there. Apparently there was a leakage of information that this legislation was to be approved because many purchasers ordered large stocks of fruit to be delivered at specified times, and the ordered stocks have been retained in the canneries.

This applies at Murray Bridge where some of these advance orders have already been paid for. Presumably the Customs officer is visiting other canneries today. Can the Premier say what the position is regarding stocks that have been ordered in advance and are still retained in the canneries? I point out that this fruit has been selling at 19s. a dozen, which is low enough already, and if the 2s. a dozen levy is applied the price will fall to 17s. a dozen. If this 2s. levy is placed on the orders that have already been taken, difficulties could arise. Can the Premier say how canneries will stand in relation to this levy and, if he cannot do so now, will he treat it as an extremely urgent matter to ascertain the position, because orders are being delivered?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have no knowledge whatever of the terms of the Commonwealth legislation, and I must confess that until the honourable member said that the legislation was passed last evening I did not know of its introduction. Therefore, I cannot advise him on the technicalities regarding the orders that have been taken at stated prices. Whether the introduction of the legislation enables the levy to be added, I do not know. However, I will find out as a matter of urgency for the honourable member, and I will ask the Prices Commissioner to investigate the order forthwith and to report to me as soon as possible. I doubt whether I can get the information today, but I hope to have something for the honourable member tomorrow.

JOSLIN FIRE HAZARD.

Mr. DUNSTAN: Last week I asked the Premier about the fire hazard on a block of land belonging to the South Australian Housing Trust at the river end of Lambert Road, Joslin. Has he a reply from the Chairman of the trust regarding this matter?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Mr. Cartledge, the Chairman of the trust, reports:

The Housing Trust owns three allotments in Tenth Avenue, Royston Park, which road runs off Lambert Road.

I think that is the locality the honourable member mentioned. The report continues:

Arrangements were made some little time ago with the Payneham corporation to clear the grass on these and other allotments. The corporation will treat the matter as urgent, but the grass is not yet ready to burn. I may mention that every year the trust incurs considerable expenditure in clearing and burning weeds on its vacant land and is conscious of its duty to carry out this work.

RIVER TORRENS IMPROVEMENTS.

Mr. COUMBE: Does the Minister of Works recall saying earlier this year that Cabinet had approved the drafting of an enabling Bill to amend the River Torrens Improvement Act to grant certain subsidies to local councils towards the improvement of the banks of the River Torrens, as well as alterations to the building alignment? Does the Minister intend to introduce the Bill this session?

The Hon. G. G. PEARSON: The Bill which was drafted or proposed to be drafted—I am not sure whether it was actually drafted—was intended not to do the two things the honourable member suggests but to do only one of them, namely, to attempt to overcome the problem that existed along the banks of the River Torrens in defining the boundaries of property and defining what may possibly be the building line beyond which point the council could, by by-law, prohibit the erection of further buildings. I think the honourable member knows that the further we went the more difficulties we encountered. Cabinet has not recently considered the introduction of legislation this session. I think rather with the lapse of time the tendency will be perhaps to adopt other means, of which I think the honourable member may be aware, of overcoming the problem or at least contributing towards its solution. Regarding the desire of councils to carry out some work in the bed of the river in constructing small lakes and ponds, I asked the Engineer-in-Chief to have the Engineer for Irrigation and Drainage examine the proposal. He did this and reported rather adversely on it. The matter was then taken a stage further by the Engineer-in-Chief, who reported to me on the re-orientation or improvement of the River Torrens as a whole. This raises many large and wide questions. The matter has been presented to Cabinet, but Cabinet has not been able to deal with it. Regarding the first part of the question, the honourable member will appreciate that it may be wise to examine further the effect of other proposed legislation before we go any further with the matters he has raised.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Mr. McKEE: Following a question I asked the Premier earlier this session regarding the establishment of a public accounts committee in this State, you, Mr. Speaker, said this matter would be referred to the Standing Orders Committee. Has it been considered by the committee and, if so, what were the committee's findings?

The SPEAKER: The honourable member will recall that yesterday, in reply to the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse), I said that the committee had made much progress regarding Standing Orders. The committee is considering the report of the Clerk (Mr. Gordon Combe) on his visit to the House of Commons, and it is now investigating some of his suggestions. We have not yet reached the report of the Clerk regarding a public accounts committee, but it is listed for future discussion by the committee.

GRAPE PRICES.

Mr. CURREN: On October 23 I asked the Premier a question about wine grape prices and he promised to examine the matter and reply later. Can he reply now?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Since the honourable member asked this question, I have inquired about wine grape prices and have had correspondence with the Prices Commissioner on the matter. I believe it is the wish of the industry that the Prices Commissioner again review wine grape prices this year. I have consulted several growers and winemakers, but I have not yet had this formally submitted to me. If grapegrowers formally request that this be done, it will be my great pleasure to approve the Prices Commissioner's making a survey again this year.

GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE.

Mr. HUGHES: In this morning's *Advertiser*, under the heading of "Expansion of Print Plant Unnecessary", appeared the following article:

Expenditure of public money on the expansion of the Government Printing Office in South Australia was completely unnecessary, the Federal president of the Printing and Allied Trades Employers' Federation of Australia (Mr. H. K. Frost) said in Adelaide yesterday. It was the opinion of the Printing Federation of Australia that a Government Printing Office should exist only for the servicing of Parliament, mainly the production of *Hansard*, and the printing of certain classes of security work, Mr. Frost said. For all other printing requirements Government and semi-government instrumentalities should make full use of commercial printing offices, making it unnecessary to spend public money on duplication. "The federation believes that tenders should be called from commercial printing companies for all major Government and semi-government printing requirements," Mr. Frost said. While not implying inefficiency in the Government Printing Office, the federation was certain that competition within the commercial printing industry compelled greater enterprise in production methods, resulting in work being produced more economically.

In view of the opinion of this House, expressed from time to time, that expansion of the Government Printing Office is necessary, does the Premier wish to reply to that statement?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I have not seen the article quoted, but I will take the honourable member's representations into account.

FALSE CAPER.

Mr. HARDING: Last week I asked the Minister of Agriculture a question about a noxious weed now growing in the South-East known as false caper. This weed seems to thrive in light sandy soils and is so little known that it is often used for decorative purposes. Has the Minister a report?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: The Director of Agriculture has prepared the following statement:

Serious outbreaks of false caper on coastal areas near Kingston and Robe are being controlled as much as possible by the district councils concerned. Tackling the heavily infested areas has been made difficult by erosion hazards and by the large number of small holdings involved where equipment and labour are not available. Efforts have therefore been concentrated on the outlying patches to try to contain the outbreak. These patches can be controlled by hand spraying, using the ester form of 2,4-D. Extensive areas need long-term pasture improvement programmes to deal with the enormous number of seedlings that keep germinating. A recent report submitted by the Weeds Advisory Committee dealing with all aspects of weed control as administered by local government in South Australia has shown that all councils in the South-East are active, although only three have programmes which, in the opinion of the Weeds Adviser, are at present adequate. Government action is now being taken to try to improve this situation. Over the past few months the cape tulip programme has created tremendous landowner interest in the South-East, and for the first time a serious weed is being controlled on a regional basis. If this interest continues, it should be possible to stop the spread of this weed within the next few years.

BARLEY STORAGE.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I understand that this year the South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited silo at Port Adelaide will be completed. Will the Minister of Agriculture approach the company to ascertain whether at least one silo cell can be made available for bulk storage of barley?

The Hon. D. N. BROOKMAN: I will take up this matter with the General Manager of South Australian Co-operative Bulk Handling Limited and bring his reply to Parliament.

**CITY OF WHYALLA COMMISSION ACT
AMENDMENT BILL.**

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

**MANNINGHAM RECREATION GROUND
ACT AMENDMENT BILL.**

Mr. JENNINGS (Enfield) obtained leave and introduced a Bill for an Act to amend the Manningham Recreation Ground Act, 1936. Read a first time.

BOOK PURCHASERS PROTECTION BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 23. Page 1210.)

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): The honourable member introduced this Bill last week, and I think every member realizes the intense attention he has given this subject, which probably arises because many of his constituents have approached him about the problem that has arisen in connection with book sales. I believe the Bill is a sincere attempt to meet what has become a problem, where people who are not trained to resist trained canvassers frequently commit themselves to expenditure beyond their means and ability to pay, sometimes paying prices greatly in excess of the value of the purchases they intend to make. I think that reasonably states the position. Highly qualified and trained salesmen visit housewives and represent in many instances that it is necessary for the education of their children that they purchase these books. Not long ago these salesmen actually represented that they were acting on behalf of the Education Department.

Mr. Ryan: That is done still.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Possibly; I do not know. The Bill provides for a stay of proceedings before an order for future payments can be made. Some time ago members of the Opposition moved successfully that a Bill that was before the House should provide that before a person could enter into a contract for a hire-purchase agreement the contract had to be endorsed by the spouse. That provision has been operating and I believe it is good legislation. When the Opposition first suggested the provision I doubted whether it should be incorporated. I have heard of no great objection to it from legitimate traders and I believe that, if the same issue were before the House today, it would accept that provision on its merits as it has been operating successfully. The honourable member's amendments are not on exactly the same

lines although they have a similar purpose. There must be a stay of proceedings before a binding agreement can be reached. I considered difficulties existed in the honourable member's original proposal and perhaps some problems would arise from the precise words in the Bill. However, I understand this has been considered by honourable members and that when the Bill reaches Committee, which I hope it does, modifications of the present proposals will be discussed. The principle as outlined by the honourable member should be supported. The Bill seeks to prevent high-pressure salesmanship from inducing people to purchase goods which are beyond their means or of no value. I support the honourable member and commend him for his work in connection with this matter.

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): I support the second reading. I see that the amendments on file cover more printing than does the Bill. Perhaps the real reason for this high-pressure salesmanship is that most salesmen are working on a commission, although some receive a retainer plus commission. I believe we should seriously consider how far we are going to permit salesmen to impose on people. This should apply not only to the sale of literature but also to the sale of vacuum cleaners, refrigerators and domestic appliances sold by high-pressure salesmanship. If it is reasonable to license marine store dealers (and they have not been high-pressure salesmen; they are doing a valuable job in cleaning up unwanted goods around houses), then perhaps licences should be issued to all salesmen. Perhaps we should go to the extent of our earlier suggestion, which was agreed to by the Premier, regarding hire-purchase agreements, and which provided that the purchase of a domestic appliance must be sanctioned by both parties before an agreement was entered into under hire-purchase. If this Bill does not accomplish all that is desired (and I doubt whether it will), then we must seriously consider the alternative of having salesmen registered. Then, if a salesman came from another State to operate here, he would have to produce a salesman's licence to show that he had the necessary qualifications.

Mr. MILLHOUSE (Mitcham): Like both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition I hope that this Bill passes the second reading and reaches Committee. I believe that there is in our community an evil (be it great or small) whereby many people are persuaded to buy books which, on reflection, they do not

really want. I hope that this Bill drafted by the member for Gouger, will do something to remedy that situation. However, I point out to the honourable member that in his second reading explanation he gave three examples drawn from his experience in his district, but the Bill will, I think, cover only the first of these examples: it will not cover the second or third example.

I mention that merely to illustrate how difficult it is to remedy such practices about which all members have had complaints from time to time. Further, high-pressure salesmanship is not new nor is it confined to the selling of books. Many other things are sold as a result of high-pressure tactics, and in a way it seems unfair to single out book sellers and, as the Bill does at present, dealers in pictures, for special mention. However, I hope that the Bill reaches Committee and, if it does, I shall suggest a few amendments. I remind the House that this is really the second bite that we have had at the cherry. In 1961 the Police Offences Act Amendment Bill, introduced by the Government, was passed. It prohibited salesmen holding themselves out as having any connection with the Education Department or as selling with the approval of the Minister of Education. That Bill provided that if salesmen did use that tactic, then the agreement should be deemed to have been induced by undue influence and be voidable at the option of the purchaser. This is not the first time we have tackled this problem, and I think that in spite of this Bill there will continue to be trouble so long as door-to-door selling of books is permitted. I would not favour the forbidding of door-to-door selling of books altogether. I think that would be going too far. It is impossible to protect fools from themselves. We can try, and I believe this Bill does try, to do something, but it is not possible in every case to protect people from entering into foolish arrangements, even though they may be induced to do so by high-pressure salesmen's tactics. Every member has had experience of this. People have often come to me complaining that they have agreed to purchase books, and on reflection have decided that they do not want them. I have always found it effective to suggest that they see a solicitor. In fact, I have acted in a legal capacity for people who have entered into such arrangements. I have in lawyer's language—which you, Mr. Acting Speaker, would appreciate—told the vendors to jump in the lake, and in every case they have done so.

Mr. Frank Walsh: Did they drown?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: They bobbed up again for more. If people avail themselves of the present law, and seek legal advice when they get into difficulties of this nature, in almost every instance the vendor will not hold the purchaser to the arrangements, whether or not a binding contract was entered into.

Mr. Clark: People have been caused bother and worry.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes, and some modest expense. I do not deny that there has been worry and upset. I have had personal experience of this. When my wife was younger, and not as wise as she is now, she succumbed to the blandishments of a door-to-door salesman.

Mr. Clark: That was the second time she succumbed.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The second time she was caught. I have not let her go, of course, although the book salesman had to. The book salesman persuaded her to buy a set of encyclopaedias. She entered into a hire-purchase contract for them, but within an hour—and before I arrived home—she regretted doing so. However, we went on with the contract, and she was pleased—because it was some salve to her pride—to discover that almost every girl in the street had been caught the same way. The man was a super salesman. What is the remedy for this problem? The Premier suggested that the spouse should sign the contract.

Mr. Hall: He did not suggest that. He said that such a provision had been introduced in other legislation.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes. I assumed from his remarks he thought that would be the way to tackle this problem. I do not think it is, because in many instances the purchaser is either unmarried or widowed and has no spouse with whom to discuss the matter. The Bill seeks to get over the problem by allowing a cooling-off period during which the intending purchaser has time to think over his decision and, incidentally, to change his mind if he wants to do so. I think that is probably as good a way of tackling the problem as any, so that is why I support the second reading. I point out, however, that the Bill is far too wide. If members examine it they will see that it applies to any contract for the sale of any book or books where the total price payable for such book or books exceeds £10. That would mean that anyone who went into the Canterbury Book Shop, Mary Martin's, or even to Preece's to buy books worth in the aggregate more than £10—and it could be a parcel of books worth only 30s. each—that

transaction would be covered by this legislation. It goes further, because "book" is defined as meaning any book, engraving, lithograph, picture or other like matter, whether illustrated or not, so the legislation would apply to any transaction for the sale and purchase of a picture, whether a water colour or oil painting.

Mr. Shannon: Read the next clause.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I have, but "book" is defined in clause 2 to include a picture. The member for Gouger would be the first to admit that he did not mean his Bill to be as wide as it has been drawn. If this Bill reaches the Committee stages I propose to submit amendments to restrict the Bill to cases where sales have been induced as a result of representations of door-to-door salesmen. That is as far as I think the legislation should go. With those few remarks, hesitant though they be, I support the second reading.

Mr. DUNSTAN (Norwood): I listened with great attention to the speech of the member for Mitcham. This is one of those rare occasions when we are in complete agreement. Obviously there is still an evil which was not covered by previous legislation passed in this House and to which the honourable member referred. Door-to-door salesmen are using high-pressure tactics, particularly in relation to the sales of books, in getting people to sign contracts for the purchase of books for large sums of money which the people can ill afford and for books which they do not want. I should be happy for legislative action to be taken to curb this particular evil. Indeed, when a Bill to amend the Police Offences Act was before this House I moved to insert a provision whereby undue persuasion should relate to all door-to-door sales of anything, but that was not agreed to. I believed that it was not only books that needed to be coped with. However, I am extremely unhappy about this particular mode of trying to curb the evil. Whilst I appreciate the efforts of the member for Mitcham to amend the Bill to make it reasonable, I still do not think he has managed to cope with the difficulties that this Bill presents. Clause 3 states:

This Act shall apply to any contract for the sale of any book or books where the total price payable for such book or books exceeds £10. That means any retail sale, for a sale is a contract of sale. So, if one purchases some books, or some pictures and books together, to the value of more than £10, all the provisions of this Act must be complied with. If I go to a book seller—and it is my habit to do so

periodically—and buy a set of books to the value of more than £10, I shall be required to have a contract signed, to return a duplicate to the book seller, and to do many things that will be a considerable fetter upon normal retail trade in books by legitimate book sellers.

Mr. Hall: I would have amended it.

Mr. DUNSTAN: I appreciate that, but we run into difficulty in amending that clause. While I cannot discuss in detail the member for Mitcham's proposed amendments, I ask: how are we to define the kinds of contract involved? As the Bill stands, the contract is defined by a price. Well, that is no good. In fact, that will still catch many legitimate book sales. It may be suggested that we define them as being only those contracts where some negotiations are carried on at the residence of the purchaser. There is a difficulty there again about that, because the whole thing could be concluded at the house, the offer to treat could be made at the house and the acceptance made elsewhere, or the offer and acceptance could be made elsewhere, and possibly we would catch the legitimate book seller who sends out a list of book bargains to his regular clients, which every regular book seller in South Australia does.

Mr. Millhouse: Do you think we could get over that by providing that the negotiations must be carried on by the vendor in person or his agent? If you tacked that on to my proposed amendment, it might work.

Mr. DUNSTAN: Carried on personally at the door by the vendor?

Mr. Millhouse: Or at the place of residence.

Mr. DUNSTAN: By the vendor or his agent in person? Yes, that might conceivably cure it. I think that the worst cases we are concerned with in these matters are probably those where the payment is to be made over a period, and that some such restriction in relation to the sales might cope with it. I know that this Bill will not cope with all the things the member for Gouger talks about. With small sales it will not matter so terribly much. Generally, large sums are not paid in cash at the door. If it is to be a payment over a period this will not relate terribly much to the retail book seller if we write in the various other restrictions that have been suggested by the member for Mitcham by way of interjection.

As it stands, we will need to do much amending in Committee to make certain that we are not adversely affecting the legitimate book trade in South Australia. Most book sellers in this State have not yet caught up with the fact that this Bill is before the House, but I heard

from one this afternoon and the telephone sizzled rather when he realized what this would do to his ordinary trade which relates in no way to the evils the member for Gouger is trying to correct by his Bill. Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, I am prepared to support the second reading to see whether in Committee we can do something that will be effective and at the same time will not harm the legitimate trader. I consider that we will have to pay close attention to this matter in Committee and give it considerable thought to see that we do just that.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga): I support this measure. Obviously, the intention of the mover is a good one. Every honourable member in this Chamber has some knowledge of the problem, because it arises in practically every individual member's district: it is a State-wide problem, and very few of us have been free of this trouble. I do not think the objections raised by my two learned friends, the members for Mitcham and Norwood, are so valid as they would have us believe. I do not for a moment dream that the legitimate book seller—the honest man of whom we have many in business in the city with agencies throughout the country—will be bothered by a legitimate customer walking in and agreeing to buy books to the value of £10 up to any amount. I do not think they will be concerned about that buyer coming back and wishing to void the contract. The legitimate book seller is satisfied with a legitimate profit; he does not want an extortionate profit, and he does not have to go to the extremes of selling costs which these door-to-door people do.

It has come to my knowledge that one person was offered £80 discount on a set of volumes, the stated price of which was £260, if he could encourage two other purchasers to buy at the full price.

Mr. Nankivell: I had an even better offer for the use of my name.

Mr. SHANNON: Possibly. Another approach was, "If you let me use your name as a likely purchaser you can buy the volumes for £180 instead of £260." I suggest to the members for Norwood and Mitcham that legitimate traders will not be affected by this business. I think the member for Gouger attacks the matter at its weakest possible point from the point of view of the go-getter salesman, by providing for a stay of proceedings to give an unhappy purchaser who has made a mistake the chance of second thoughts. I believe that is hitting these

people where it will hurt them most. If they were legitimate traders and selling a valid article for a reasonable price they would not complain about a purchaser saying, "Well, I will let you know in a week whether this is going to be a firm contract or not." They would know that investigation would prove that their article was as they stated it to be and that it was worth the money they were charging. We all know that people are led into these unhappy contracts by the slick character—the fellow who can put his story over. He calls at the home while the husband is at work, and after telling his story about how the children at the home will suffer when everyone else's children in the street will enjoy the privilege of these educational necessities, the poor unhappy housewife thinks she had better be in it too, and he talks her into it.

Where people are talked into contracts by what I call unfair pressures—and that is putting it mildly—I think they should be given an opportunity to deny the contract upon reflection, and I think that is the best way we can achieve our goal of wiping out this method of selling. I am not a bit fearful that the legitimate person who has something worthwhile to sell and is offering it at a fair price will suffer at all under this legislation. If they have a good article at a reasonable price and the contract is a reasonable one, the purchaser will not want to break the contract. However, if the purchaser wants to break it and has a valid reason for doing so, I think he should have that opportunity. If legitimate trading cannot be carried on under this measure, I should be surprised. I do not think this will affect any honest businessman. If any person in business is carrying on in such a way that the people with whom he is dealing think that they are not getting what they are paying for or that they are entering into a contract that is unduly harsh, they should have the right to have a second thought on whether they should commit themselves to paying something they cannot afford.

I have an open mind about the amendments foreshadowed by the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse). However, I think some of the fears expressed by the honourable member and by the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) were based on false grounds. After all, if a man is honest the law will not hurt him; if he is dishonest and he is caught, he deserves all he gets. This particular law may be harsh, but I draw attention to the recently passed consolidated company law now in force throughout the Commonwealth. I am in the

unhappy position of being the director of a company and, fair dinkum, if I get only a shade off the straight line, what they can do to me is nobody's business! I hope not to get off that line, however. That law was passed for a purpose, and the restrictions on directors were for a purpose. I am not complaining about the penalties that fall to the lot of a director who does the wrong thing; I think he justly deserves them. If it were not for the unhappy occurrences in our business community, possibly that law would not have been passed, and, if it were not for the unhappy experiences all of us have had in this door-knocking bookselling racket, this Bill would not have been before us now. I heartily support it. In Committee I will do my best to follow the argument, and I hope we do not destroy the effect of the proposal put forward by too much watering down. Do not forget that we are after someone who, I believe, is guilty of an offence against society.

Mr. Millhouse: If anything, the proposed amendments make it stronger.

Mr. SHANNON: If that is so, I shall not complain. I think the definition of "book" needs tightening up. I see some difficulty there, because I know that some people are going around the countryside taking family photographs, and I do not think they are doing any harm. The photographer is getting a rather meagre living, and often people want a family group, which is facilitated by these people. Apart from this, some people like to have the family atmosphere. Pictures may or may not be included in this definition; I do not know if such a practice is excluded. However, I am not vitally concerned about it because, if there is any photographic organization taking people on for high charges and we think the people are being slugged unnecessarily, I have no objection to their having the opportunity to have a second think about the contract.

Mr. LOVEDAY (Whyalla): I have pleasure in supporting this Bill, which I think will become more workable after it has been dealt with in Committee, because I think one or two holes need plugging. I have received many complaints about the operations of book sellers in my district, and have also had correspondence from other parts of the State. I have found that many of the people who have suffered from visits of high-pressure salesmen have been unfortunate enough not to have had a good education, and they have been concerned for the education of their children. This has been

the weak point upon which the salesmen have seized. The majority of cases that have come to my notice have been in that category.

I think we must recognize that we are now in an era when this type of salesman has become highly trained to work on human weaknesses by applying psychological pressure. We have not seen this to any great extent before; it is a feature of present-day salesmanship, and I think we must take measures to combat it. I should like to see this measure extended to other things, too, because I think these high-pressure salesmen are causing just as much trouble in the domestic scene as are book salesmen.

The member for Mitcham referred to saving fools from their folly, but I think that is rather too broad a generalization; I think that he will agree with me when he considers his later remark that his wife was taken down in a similar manner. This is not so much saving fools from their folly as preventing people from being imposed on by men skilled in applying pressure and trained to take advantage of human weakness. It is a case not of a person cancelling a contract after mature reflection but of a contract being cancelled after the husband comes home and looks at the matter differently. There is then a domestic squabble and the couple decide they will not go on with the contract.

Buying things under the conditions that pertain when a salesman calls at the front door in the absence of the husband is different from the housewife's going along in the ordinary way to a retail shop to make purchases. It is a great pity that people do not realize when so many offers are made to them of enormous discounts that this is a costly method of selling things and that the price being asked is therefore far in excess of what it should be. Apart from this, when people buy an article from a local retailer they have someone to whom they can go back if they are not satisfied.

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: One of the worst features is the insistence afterwards that the contract be complied with even though one party opposes it.

Mr. LOVEDAY: I agree. I am sure that many people who enter into these contracts have no idea of the complete way in which they are tied. The contract is presented to them in a way that is totally different from what it contains. I am pleased that the period suggested for, shall I say, a second thought on this matter may be extended; I think that is desirable. When this Bill has been considered

in Committee, I think it will be a workable instrument in stopping many of these practices by salesmen who, in most instances, have no compunction about taking down the customer. I consider that if this legislation is passed it could have a deterrent effect on salesmen peddling other things, because their operations may be curtailed somewhat and they may adopt a different attitude, having in mind that they may be the next on the list for attention.

Mr. Shannon: In other words, it will be a warning.

Mr. LOVEDAY: Yes. I should not be surprised to see salesmen change their attitude regarding the selling of many other articles should these provisions apply. People in my district have been saddled with the most expensive books, perhaps up to the value of £100, which they cannot afford and for which they have no real use. I remember one set of books provided by a salesman as absolutely necessary for the success of children at school. It was a sort of pictorial history. The books were complete rubbish as a help to learning history, and yet these salesmen were getting away with selling these books at a high price by simply relying on the ignorance of the purchasers. I have much pleasure in supporting this Bill, and believe that when it has been considered in Committee it will be a workable instrument that will do much good in the community.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa): I support the Bill, but I regret the need for it. It is the outcome of the actions of a minority of itinerant book sellers. It is a pity that the misconduct of a few should restrict the transactions of all itinerant book sellers. While "itinerant" is not used in the Bill I understand that its provisions will apply to the itinerant seller. I believe that all the principles of good business are broken by high-pressure salesmen who call on the lady of the house in the absence of the husband and, by their salesmanship, good psychology and the approach to a sale have that person sign a contract in a moment of succumbing to the salesman's ability. Then the prospective purchaser meets with an adamant refusal thereafter to reconsider what has been accepted after he has been talked into it, as it were.

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: That, more than anything else, has prompted this legislation.

Mr. LAUCKE: Yes, that is the basis of it. It is poor business to extort an order and then to insist on the sale when the person who is committed to it is completely kept on a string

irrespective of the condition of the sale in the first place, or the hurt occasioned the family through carrying out the contract entered into.

Mr. Shannon: It is lowering the standard of reasonable, respectable commercial business.

Mr. LAUCKE: Yes. In good commercial business the salesman would not be afraid to return to his client and sell a second time in a good atmosphere. These short-term sales, as it were, of a salesman making one deal and saying, "Now I have you; I will hold you to the sale; I do not want you again," are not the tenor of good business. That is the spirit attacked by the member for Gouger in this legislation, for which I commend him. He is doing a service to the community by introducing this legislation. The Bill is directed only at those who are not decent citizens themselves, but who will, through certain abilities, obtain orders in a way not in accordance with normal decent business practice. I support this Bill, and in Committee will look closely at amendments that will undoubtedly improve the original provisions.

Mr. HUTCHENS (Hindmarsh): I support the second reading, and congratulate the member for Gouger on his sincerity of purpose, but I must confess that I agree with the honourable member for Mitcham and the honourable member for Norwood and express my fears, because I consider that this Bill, with all its good intentions, has been introduced hurriedly and without much consideration. When we introduce legislation we should make sure that we are not dealing with only one section of the public or one section of commerce and trade while at the same time harming other sections. People other than book sellers are trading in an undesirable manner in his State. The honourable member for Albert, by interjection, said that he was offered something for the use of his name. Perhaps his name is like mine: apparently pretty good, because a travelling salesman called on me one night trying to sell an electric light. I carefully took down the details he was giving me because I have a son skilled in that business who is a salesman for a similar type of light. This salesman said that I could have the light installed in two rooms if he sold to five others in the street by using my name. It was not a bad offer, but when I referred it to my son he informed me that I could have had a light in every room and the person would still make a profit at his price because it was only a sales gimmick. That type of person makes this legislation necessary. We must not forget

that many reputable traders operate. The member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) said that no honest trader need fear the law, but if the law is wrong or is too drastic then perhaps an honest trader could fear it.

Mr. Shannon: The honest trader would not suffer because the buyer would be allowed second thoughts on purchasing.

Mr. HUTCHENS: I am not sure about that. I consider that the legislation was introduced hurriedly, as is shown by the number of amendments on file. I am not saying that it was not introduced with the best intentions. Consider an insurance agent: I had the pleasure of earning money as one.

Mr. Shannon: Some of them on the rounds today are not doing too badly.

Mr. HUTCHENS: That is so. I doubt whether anyone who has been an insurance agent has not had a person take out a policy rather reluctantly. I have never sold a policy that was not in the best interests of the insurer to take out, but at the same time he has been reluctant. If he had not signed on the dotted line he would never have done something that was really in his own interest.

Mr. Ryan: He may have regretted it afterwards.

Mr. HUTCHENS: Perhaps.

Mr. Freebairn: Having a life insurance policy is having something of real value.

Mr. HUTCHENS: I know full well the point the honourable member is making. People in the districts represented by the members for Norwood and Port Adelaide and me seem to be a prey for these salesmen.

Mr. Shannon: Why not give all people purchasing any article a week to think about it?

Mr. HUTCHENS: If that were done a person could go to a book seller and say, "I am going to buy £50 worth of books; I will take them home and think about it for a week," and at the end of the week return the books and say, "They are no good," even though he has read them.

Mr. Shannon: Why not let him have a week in which to think about it, and then return and collect the books?

Mr. HUTCHENS: If such a provision were to apply to books it should apply to other articles, including insurance. This provision would add to costs and would result in higher premiums for insurance policies. I have examined the proposed amendments and whilst I think they will improve the Bill I think that members should treat the proposals with extreme caution. I support the second reading, but it

will depend on what happens during the Committee stages whether I support the third reading.

Mr. FREEBAIRN (Light): I commend my colleague, the member for Gouger, for his enterprise in introducing this measure. I do not doubt that almost every member has, at some stage of his career in this place, had difficulty with door-to-door book sellers. In my own short term I have had experience of at least half a dozen cases. In fact, I have been able to cancel only two contracts, and both of those cases involved me in much trouble. Whilst the books were not worthless, they were of little real value for the purpose for which they were sold. My point is that there is no real value in the books that are sold by such salesmen. In those cases that have been referred to me I believe that the books could have been purchased through normal retail channels for a price not more than half the contract price offered by the travelling salesman. When constituents approach me I always recommend that they purchase books from local traders and through recognized retail channels.

Mr. Jennings: By the time they get that advice it is too late.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: I concede that that is usually so. However, by purchasing goods through recognized retail channels they are assured that they can obtain a reasonable service subsequently and that the books they purchase are not spurious.

Mr. Shannon: And that the books are reasonably priced.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Yes. I am pleased to support the second reading.

Mr. JENNINGS (Enfield): I support the Bill. I applaud the member for Gouger for introducing it. I think this is the first time in the years that we have been associated that I have ever agreed with him. That means, of course, that I always agree with him when he is right. It is significant that today prominent businessmen in this Chamber support the general proposition contained in this Bill. It seems to be accepted that the Bill will pass the second reading without much trouble. My only purpose in speaking is to point out that, as far as I know, I was the first member to raise the question of the behaviour of these book salesmen when this rotten racket first started. Since then question after question has been raised and the matter has been taken up by members and by the Government, and

some amendment has been made to the Police Offences Act. However, it is now clear that the stage has been reached where the only way this evil can be dealt with is by specific legislation, and I am certainly pleased that the member for Gouger has gone ahead with this Bill. Shocking tactics are used in peddling these books.

Mr. Hall: High-pressure salesmanship of the worst type.

Mr. JENNINGS: Yes. The member for Whyalla (Mr. Loveday) said it was trading on human weakness in many cases. It is not only trading on human weakness, but frequently it is trading on the best instincts of people when a mother is told that she must give her child what is being given to the child next door.

Mr. Lawn: The salesmen tell the mothers that their children might fail if they do not have the benefit of the books.

Mr. JENNINGS: Yes. I do not know whether the position obtains now, but originally the salesmen claimed that the books were recommended by the Education Department. I have had two salesmen call on me at different times, and there is no doubt that they have learnt their stories off pat. Both stories were identical. I did not disclose that I was a member of Parliament. Obviously these salesmen were trained in this brain-washing technique. My colleague, the member for Unley (Mr. Langley), has had a case referred to him where a salesman kept mentioning a sum of £44. When the contract was to be signed by the purchaser he held a piece of paper over the top part of it. Admittedly the purchaser was foolish and should have read the contract (but how many people do?) because he now finds out that the contract is for £144 and not £44. I agree with some members that this Bill will require tidying up in Committee. That is our job. If we pass legislation of this type it may have a salutary effect not only on book sellers generally but on all door-to-door peddlars.

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER (Angas): I, too, support the Bill and congratulate the member for Gouger on his enthusiasm in bringing it forward. During the last two or three years salesmen have been extremely active in my district in trying to sell not only books but household gadgets. They use high-pressure tactics—indeed, snide practices—in persuading housewives to purchase such articles. One case came to my notice about nine months ago. A salesman with some books called on a lady.

First he ingratiated himself with some of the children who were naturally interested in the colourful books, and then he obtained the sympathy of the mother. The mother was persuaded to sign a contract, but before doing so she told the salesman that she wished to consult her husband. The salesman then said that surely she would not expect him to waste his time waiting for the husband to come home, and he asked her to pay a deposit of £1. She replied that she did not have £1 in the house, and she was then promptly told by the salesman that she should go to her neighbour and borrow the money. When she said she was not prepared to do that, the salesman offered to pay a deposit of 10s. himself; he did that, and wrote out a receipt for that amount. The books were delivered and later, when the husband came home, he was dissatisfied with the contract and with what was being paid for the books. Efforts being made to have the contract upset, I was consulted, and the matter was not proceeded with.

This is the type of thing that has been going on, I think in most country areas in this State. Usually these salesmen come in groups, and frequently two come together. One such salesman who was employed by a business house in another State was subsequently proceeded against and prosecuted, and after he had been found guilty it was disclosed that he had many previous convictions in this State and also, I believe, in other States.

Mr. Lawn: One person had 20 previous convictions.

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: Yes. Some salesmen engaged in this type of work seem to be undesirable; others have no doubt been tutored in the art of high-pressure salesmanship, and many women are easily persuaded to sign a contract which subsequently is not approved of by the husband. I think this Bill is a step in the right direction, and I have every confidence that members will support it. I trust that when it is in Committee some salutary amendments will be made to the measure, because I want to be certain that the genuine sellers of books and the business houses of high repute are not penalized or caught up with in any way by this legislation. I think the time may come sooner or later when it may be necessary to go even a step further. This legislation applies only to the sale of books, pictures and similar articles, but many high-pressure salesmen operate in South Australia selling other articles, such as household gadgets. Some such sales were brought to my notice and, on having them

referred by the Premier to the Prices Commissioner, it was discovered that many of those household gadgets were being offered for sale in country areas at a rate considerably higher than the market price prevailing in the metropolitan area. That has been disclosed by an investigation of the Prices Commissioner.

Mr. Clark: There is often difficulty in getting service for those articles, too.

The Hon. B. H. TEUSNER: That is so. As I said earlier, many business houses that send out these salesmen are located in other States, and that makes it all the more difficult to negotiate with such organizations for the cancellation of contracts. Also, if proceedings are taken for the enforcement of the contract or for the payment of instalments, the position could be made more difficult because the vendor is resident in another State and carrying on business there and action could be taken in a court in that State against a purchaser who is in South Australia. Members will see in what a difficult position such a purchaser is placed if he or she has to enter a defence to an action in a Victorian court; it would involve a purchaser in much expense. I trust that this Bill will commend itself to members, and that as a result of its passing—and I hope it will be passed—something useful will result in the interests of the public of South Australia.

Mr. LAWN (Adelaide): I support the Bill. The history of this matter goes back some years when members complained about these high-pressure salesmen selling books, particularly allegedly educational books. As the member for Enfield (Mr. Jennings) said, many salesmen led the housewives to believe that their children would not pass at school unless they had these books, which they claimed were recommended by the Education Department. The Minister of Education promised the House that he would interview the principals of these firms and point out what was being said by their salesmen, and I understand that he reported back to this House that the principals had assured him that they did not tolerate the actions of the salesmen and that they would see that the position was corrected.

Rather than the position being corrected, it has become worse, and that proves to my mind that the principals of the firms are responsible. I think that all members know that these salesmen are practically word perfect: they are drilled by their principals on what to say. The fact that the principals have not carried out their promise as related to us by the

Minister of Education proves that they are treating this Parliament with contempt, and therefore anything we do in this Parliament to stop them from peddling their wares from door to door would be perfectly justified. According to the press, the Governments of Victoria and New South Wales intend to introduce legislation similar to this Bill. I have had correspondence with the Opposition Whip in Western Australia, who has told me that they have these groups of high-pressure book salesmen working there and has asked whether we have had any trouble here and whether any action has been taken. I have sent a report to Western Australia, but I did not send a copy of this Bill because it was not available last week. However, I will send a copy of the Bill, relate the position as we understand it here, and point out that other Governments are introducing similar legislation. The fact that so many Parliaments are taking action along the lines indicated in this Bill justifies all our criticism and any action we might take to stop this group from acting as it has been.

Several years ago we went so far as to amend the Police Offences Act to cope with this position, but these book sellers defied this Parliament and they are still treating Parliament with contempt. Not only did we approach them in a gentlemanly manner through the Minister of Education: we have since passed an amendment to the Police Offences Act to cope with the position. Those people have defied us and they are intensifying their efforts. The sums for which we are told they are holding people up are far higher than any that has ever been mentioned previously. I have suggested all along that the best way to deal with this problem is to license these salesmen so that only people of good repute may obtain a licence. On previous occasions I have mentioned the case referred to by the member for Angas (Hon. B. H. Teusner) of a person with 20 previous convictions for theft and other offences. This fact was ascertained in the Nuriootpa Police Court where, I think, the case was heard. That is the type of person going around selling books. If licensing were introduced, as I have pointed out to the Government, this type of person would be excluded.

Mr. Bywaters: Don't you think a bond could be associated with the licence?

Mr. LAWN: Yes, I agree; they should be forced to put up a bond as is done by land agents.

Mr. Hutchens: Insurance agents have to do that, too.

Mr. LAWN: Yes, many other people in responsible positions have to do it. The Government has refused to accept my suggestion. However, the Premier recently was prompted to voice his opinion—which is still the best on this—that the peddling of books from door to door should be completely prohibited. This would not stop genuine salesmen in shops, but it would prevent people from going from door to door talking people into making high-priced purchases. However, I doubt if the Premier would introduce that legislation, and I think the House is indebted to the member for Gouger (Mr. Hall) for introducing this Bill. I should like to see the amount reduced from £10 to £5, but I do not want to sabotage the Bill. The member for Angas suggested what might be done in Committee, and this may be the answer. However, I hope there is no attempt in Committee to add things other than books to this measure and so wreck it. It has come before the House because of a special need, and I hope that in Committee we will treat it in that way. I also hope that, to deal with what has occurred over the years, members will make the Bill retrospective to January 1, 1956.

Mr. HEASLIP (Rocky River): As the Bill stands, although I support its intentions and support the second reading to enable it to get into Committee, I hope some amendment will be included. My main objection to it is that its object, as I see it, is to prohibit people from peddling from door to door. However, the measure is all-embracing, and I support the member for Mitcham (Mr. Millhouse) and the member for Norwood (Mr. Dunstan) in saying that it will prevent a person from making a contract and buying over the counter. For instance, if I wished to buy an expensive ledger for £12 from a shop, I could not take delivery of it. Alternatively, if I did, it would be on the trust of the person selling it. I would have to wait for seven days before I could get the ledger unless it was handed over in trust. In this instance, the purchaser would be affected.

Mr. Bywaters: That can be altered in Committee.

Mr. HEASLIP: That is what I was saying. I support the second reading but, if the measure is not amended, I shall not be able to support it on third reading, because it is far too embracing. It goes further than I have already pointed out: if an artist held an exhibition of paintings and I, as an interstate

purchaser, wanted to buy one of his works for more than £10, I should not be able to take it away with me.

Mr. Bywaters: You would not buy it if its price were under £10, would you?

Mr. HEASLIP: No, that is the point; it would be over £10.

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: To let you have it, he would reduce the price.

Mr. HEASLIP: It would be nice if he would, but I do not think he would. As a result, the artist would lose the sale and I would lose the opportunity to purchase his painting. If he sold it, he would be breaking the law. Although I support the second reading, I hope the measure will be amended in Committee.

Mr. CLARK (Gawler): The member for Gouger (Mr. Hall) can take pride in having brought this matter before the House, as it is a considerable time since a matter introduced by a private member has had as many speakers as has had this Bill. I support the second reading, but I fear that this could well be the most amended piece of legislation brought before us for a considerable time. However, I do not think that matters because, as many members have shown, it is the spirit behind the measure that everyone supports.

Mr. Jennings: And there is a need for it.

Mr. CLARK: I agree. I am reluctant to do anything to curtail the sale of books. Anyone who has been in my home knows that I am a book lover and that the place is full of books. Some members seem to be under the impression that the selling of books from door to door has sprung up in the last few years, but that is not so; it has been going on for as long as I can remember.

Mr. Jennings: I think the tactics are now different.

Mr. CLARK: That is so. When I was a young teacher in the country I bought a set of books I could not afford, but I managed to pay for them. These books have become of inestimable value, and my children have enjoyed them. Many completely reputable firms have salesmen selling books from door to door, and these salesmen are the type one would expect to be employed by such firms. We should realize that the methods complained of are not used by all salesmen, although they are used by many; apparently they are catching, because over the last few years more and more have adopted the same questionable tactics.

Mr. Bywaters: This will not prohibit the reputable people.

Mr. CLARK: No, I do not think it will. I think it was the member for Light (Mr. Freebairn) who said that the quality of most of the books was not good. These books can be divided into two classes. Those sold from door to door by old-established firms are fine products and an asset to any home, but most sold by high-pressure salesmen are an inferior article. I believe firms of standing will welcome this legislation if it is tidied up, as I expect it to be tidied up in Committee. As members know, I represent the new and growing district of Elizabeth, which in the main is made up of people from overseas who have had to spend much money to become established. Most of them are parents and, when representations are made to them that these books will be of wonderful value to their children—and possibly some are—the inevitable thing happens. The mother who has a natural love for her children and a desire to see them get on in the world falls for the bait. When the father comes home (and he is the one to pay up the cash) he brings an air of cold reality into the transaction, and then the fun starts. I have had dozens, perhaps hundreds, of persons come to me who have been worried about difficulties with book salesmen. Women have come to me in tears, and I do not think that all the salesmen in the world are worth the anguish caused to these mothers. Most wives do not like to suffer a reproach from their husbands, although this has happened in many cases. Something should be done to deal with the objectionable salesman. I was concerned when I heard the second reading explanation because I thought of the effect this legislation would have on people dealing at legitimate bookshops. I understand that these provisions will be tidied up in Committee. No doubt the collective wisdom of members should be able to improve this legislation to a standard well worth while so that it will benefit this State.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray): I support the second reading and hope, with other members, that in Committee the provisions of the Bill will be clarified to meet the requirements. It will not deprive the legitimate book salesman or the person who properly sells a genuine article of his right to conduct his business correctly. Recently the Premier said (probably on the spur of the moment) that he would ban all book sellers from selling at the door, but this would not be desirable as many legitimate salesmen travel from door to door. I recall

when salesmen were welcome, particularly in the country, where shops were some distance away and the country folk could rely on the people calling at the door. Many of these salesmen became well known over the years, worked a regular round, and met the same people who enjoyed their visits. Unfortunately, since the war we have had types of "Johnny come lately" who have upset the former relationships, and now we find people are wary of anyone selling articles at the door. This is not a good thing, particularly for country people who have enjoyed this privilege before and who trusted the people who called with a reasonably priced article to sell.

Today stand-over tactics are adopted: seldom does one salesman come to the door as salesmen usually come in pairs and have the householder in a corner and under pressure. Recently I heard a tape recording of a method of book selling that was highly pressurized and highly questionable. It is difficult to apprehend these people because they act just within the law and it is hard to prove anything against them. The member for Adelaide said that this type of selling was of long standing; we must agree with that statement. Most members have brought to the notice of the Minister of Education problems associated with this matter, and many of the tactics have been instanced in this House.

Three or four years ago two book sellers called on the headmaster of a school at Murray Bridge, when this type of book selling was comparatively new. They asked him for permission to leave the books in his office so that he could look at them, without any cost and without any obligation to buy. He agreed to do this, thinking that it was something on which they wanted a comment from him. To his horror he found that his name was being used throughout the district as a reference for the books and that people were being told he had a set. These salesmen were giving people to understand that the headmaster of the school was recommending to parents of schoolchildren that they should buy the books because, after all, the headmaster had a set and therefore they must be good. The headmaster had no knowledge of this until he was informed later. He returned the books with a few added comments of his opinion of this type of selling, but many people had already purchased the books.

It has been said that other types of selling operate similarly. Recently I had brought to my notice a group of insurance brokers that was travelling amongst the people and telling

a plausible story. They have been visiting householders and using similar tactics and their activities are causing much concern in my district. If this group is not stopped it will cause trouble in other members' districts. This group selected the district of Murray and has now moved into the district of Ridley. No doubt it will move elsewhere if it is not stopped. The group's set-up is being investigated at present, and I am sure the Minister will receive an interesting report on this firm, which I call "bogus" in relation to what it is doing. This group is causing much disruption in the community, and is making it difficult for legitimate people to carry on business.

Mr. Jennings: There are certainly illegitimate people, too.

Mr. BYWATERS: They are the ones I am referring to: ones who are not playing the game and who are using dubious tactics. They affect the genuine salesman and that matter concerns me, having been a salesman myself. I hope the Bill will be amended in Committee to cover some of the matters overlooked in its preparation, because I fear these tactics that are being adopted.

Mr. HUGHES (Wallaroo): I support the second reading of what I consider to be a most important Bill. It will be of great benefit to the people of this State, and I hope that it is passed after being amended to the satisfaction of members. The member for Gouger must gain much satisfaction from knowing that he has received the support of so many members from both sides. This indicates that this legislation is long overdue. It was thought when the Minister of Education intervened some time ago, that this problem had been suitably ironed out, but unfortunately that was not the case.

Some members have suggested that the books that have been sold by door-to-door salesmen have been of no value to the purchasers, but that has not been my experience. In the cases brought to my notice the books have been valuable and could have benefited the purchasers if they had read them. Nothing has caused as much heartache as, or strained family relations more than, the activities of these high-pressure salesmen. I wonder what effect these book sellers have had on those people who have migrated to South Australia. Apparently these people are a target for book salesmen. I am sure that South Australia has not gained a good reputation from permitting these salesmen to continue.

Reference has been made to the concessions offered to members of Parliament to permit their names to be used by these book sellers. In April or May last a man called on me at 9 o'clock one morning, introduced himself, and offered me a set of books if I permitted him to use my name when he sold books in Wallaroo. I did not accept his offer and I do not think I need recount what I said to him. A constituent who had been persuaded to sign a contract for the purchase of books called on me and complained about the situation that had developed in her household. The family relationships were strained. She had an adopted son, and the book seller had told her that it was her duty to see that this boy received the same benefits as other children. I know that that child was receiving as much consideration as any other child in Wallaroo, but the salesman persuaded her that it was essential for her to purchase these books. The salesman played on her sympathies until she signed the contract, and when her husband came home from work relationships became strained.

On one occasion I stayed overnight at a Maitland hotel. In the morning whilst I was waiting in the bathroom for a shower recess to become vacant I overheard a conversation between the occupants of two of the showers. They were men who had not met for some time and one asked the other how he was doing. The second man explained that he was travelling around the country, visiting farms and selling books. He was asked, "Do you do very well out of it?" and he replied, "I'll say I do. I get £50 for every set I sell and I sold four sets yesterday." If a man can make £50 on each set of books he sells, obviously the books are over-priced; and obviously the salesman is better paid than a politician. It is high time these salesmen were restricted. If they continue their tactics after this legislation is enacted I hope that the courts will impose heavy penalties.

Mr. HALL (Gouger): I thank members for supporting the Bill, although I realize that their support is conditional on its being amended in Committee. I would not support the Bill as it stands now: I introduced it so that it could be improved. I hope that it will be expeditiously dealt with in Committee.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Clause 3—"Application."

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I move:

Before "This Act" to insert "Subject to section 6".

This is merely a drafting amendment to link clauses 3 and 6.

Amendment carried.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I move:

To strike out "any" and insert "every".

This is purely a drafting amendment.

Mr. Shannon: What effect will it have?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The Parliamentary Draftsman suggested that the provision should relate to "every contract" instead of "any contract". I doubt whether there is much distinction, but the Parliamentary Draftsman preferred it that way.

Amendment carried.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I move:

After "pounds" to insert "and negotiations carried on by the vendor or his agent in person and leading to the making of such contract are conducted or take place wholly or partly at the place of residence of the purchaser."

That amendment is slightly different from the amendment that appears on the file, and I am indebted here to the member for Norwood who raised the question of reputable book shops sending out lists of books for sale. That could conceivably be construed as being part of negotiations for sale. The effect will be to restrict the ambit of this Bill to itinerant salesmen. I think it will effectively cut out transactions taking place at a book shop or at a private art gallery.

Mr. Dunstan: Or by post.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes. If a book salesman goes to a person's house and negotiates for the purchase of books, this Act will apply. It will not apply if a person goes into a book shop to buy books in the normal course of events.

Mr. Lawn: What about a person who is approached at his place of employment?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: In that case I must admit that this would not apply.

Mr. Lawn: I think a person's place of employment should be included.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I have never heard of that happening. However, it is up to the honourable member to do something about that if he wishes to do so.

Mr. Bywaters: It does happen.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Perhaps it is something we should cover. I am content to move the amendment in the form I have suggested, which will provide for all the cases about which I thought there had been a complaint.

Mr. LAWN: I seek your guidance, Mr. Chairman, about whether the amendment before the Committee should be dealt with before I move an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member should move his amendment now.

Mr. LAWN moved:

After "residence" in Mr. Millhouse's amendment to add "or employment".

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I do not oppose that amendment.

Mr. CLARK: What if a salesman called at the place of residence of the purchaser and the purchaser had a friend there who was interested and, being influenced by the sales talk, was prepared to purchase books at his friend's house?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: This is one of the difficulties we get into in trying to dot every "i" and cross every "t". I admit that what the honourable member refers to is something that could conceivably happen. When I drafted this amendment originally I suggested to the Parliamentary Draftsman that perhaps we could use the words "negotiations that take place in the dwellinghouse", and then we wondered whether that could catch somebody who boarded or was living at a hotel. Eventually, we decided on the words "place of residence". If the member for Gawler can think of a way of catching the case that he puts up, fair enough, but I think that so rarely will such an instance happen that it is something we probably could leave unsaid.

Mr. CLARK: A particularly good salesman might conceive the idea of canvassing an area and getting eight or 10 people together at one dwellinghouse, where he could get to work with his high-pressure sales talk. Some of these chaps are pretty smart.

Mr. Freebairn: It is not a hypothetical case, either: it is not uncommon.

Mr. LAWN: I consider that the member for Mitcham's original thought about "dwellinghouse" would cover the position.

Mr. SHANNON: The objection raised by the member for Gawler could be suitably overcome by deleting the word "the" and inserting the word "a".

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes, and I think also by deleting the words "of the purchaser". I will ask the Parliamentary Draftsman what he thinks about that.

Mr. DUNSTAN: We will be running into difficulties here. If the amendment is made to delete "the", to insert "a", and to delete "of the purchaser", then the contract would be effected if it were conducted at a place of residence or at a place of employment, and that promptly brings every book shop back into the field again. If the negotiations were carried

on at a friend's house, they would not be carried on at "a place of residence". There would still be difficulties.

The CHAIRMAN: The amendment moved by the member for Adelaide to the amendment of the member for Mitcham is to insert after "residence" the words "or employment".

Mr. Lawn's amendment carried.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: The Parliamentary Draftsman suggests that we should leave the clause as it is now amended, otherwise we would run into much difficulty.

Mr. Shannon: It can be corrected in another place.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Yes, it can be.

Mr. Millhouse's amendment, as amended, carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 4—"Evidence of contracts not complying with certain conditions."

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I move:

After "Every such contract shall be" to strike out "absolutely void" and insert "unenforceable against the purchaser".

The effect of this amendment will be that a vendor will not be able to take action against a purchaser unless the conditions laid down subsequently in this clause are complied with. On the other hand, the purchaser will have a right of action against the vendor. This will strengthen the position of a person thinking of buying books, and from a legal point of view it is a much better way to put it.

Amendment carried.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I move:

After "This contract" in paragraph (b) to strike out "shall not be effective" and insert "is unenforceable against the purchaser".

This amendment is consequential on the amendment just carried.

Amendment carried.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I move:

After "purchaser" in paragraph (b) to strike out all words and insert "notifies the vendor in writing not less than five nor more than 14 days after the date hereof that he confirms it".

This amendment has much more substance. It deals with the method by which the intending purchaser notifies his confirmation of the contract. In the original draft it was provided that the purchaser would have to return the duplicate copy of the contract, which had to be left with the purchaser when he gave the order. I think it is better to provide that he may write a letter or fill in a form left with him, because it does not bind him to any form of words to confirm the contract. More important, many people—and I am one of them—like to keep a duplicate copy of a contract for the whole time.

Mr. Clark: That is the usual thing.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: It is. The member for Gouger provided that the copy had to be sent back by the purchaser, which meant that he would not have a copy. This part of the amendment is probably acceptable to the Committee. The second thing that the amendment provides is a period of between five and 14 days during which a contract has to be confirmed. The member for Gouger simply provided for seven days, with no limit. Dealing first with the limit, I think it is only fair to the seller of the books that there should be some limit during which the intending purchaser can confirm the contract. As the measure now stands, the purchaser could wait for six months or six years before confirming the contract. This would obviously be unfair and against all business practice. I think there should be an upper limit, which I have fixed at 14 days, during which time the purchaser must confirm the contract.

Mr. Clark: What is the idea of the lower limit?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I fixed 14 days as the upper limit because I thought it was long enough. I should have been happy to make the lower limit three days, as in other States.

Mr. Clark: Why have it at all?

Mr. MILLHOUSE: Because without it the salesman could come back the next day.

Mr. Clark: There is still the 14-day limit.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: That is the period during which a purchaser may confirm a contract. If there is no lower limit the salesman can walk out of the front door and come back in a few minutes to ask for the contract to be confirmed. That would be before the person had got away from his influence, so some period after the order is made must be fixed to allow the customer to have second thoughts.

Mr. Loveday: This is sometimes necessary so that the husband can come home.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: That is right, and that is why I say five days. The member for Gouger pointed out that a salesman might call on the wife on the Monday and persuade her to give him an order and that the husband might be away working and might not return until the Friday. If we did not make it five days, the salesman might come back and she might confirm the order before her husband had a chance to discuss it with her. The member for Gouger therefore suggested that the period should be at least as long as the normal working week, which is five days. I remind members of section 27 (2) of the Acts Interpretation Act, which provides:

If the time so prescribed or allowed falls or expires on a Saturday or Sunday, or on any public holiday, such time shall be extended so as to fall or expire on the day next following such Saturday or Sunday or public holiday which is not itself a public holiday or Saturday or Sunday.

In other words, if the fifth day is a Saturday or Sunday the salesman cannot return until the Monday. The first day is not counted, and if the salesman comes on a Monday the first day of counting is Tuesday: with five days, a weekend must always intervene before the salesman can return to confirm the contract. It means that the period is no less than five days. If the contract is not confirmed within 14 days it is cancelled and the transaction is off.

Mr. HALL: The amendment improves the Bill.

Amendment carried.

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I move:

In paragraph (d) to strike out "seven" and insert "five nor more than 14"; and to strike out all words after "has" and insert "notified the vendor in writing that the purchaser confirms such contract".

These are consequential amendments.

Amendments carried; clause as amended passed.

Clause 5—"Receipt of deposits."

Mr. MILLHOUSE: I move:

After "has" to strike out "returned the duplicate of such contract delivered to the purchaser" and insert "notified the vendor in writing that the purchaser confirms such contract".

This, again, is consequential on the alteration in the method of showing confirmation of the contract. In considering all these amendments I have not overlooked the notes sent to members on behalf of Colliers and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, setting out the methods of their salesmen. I am sure that these companies and their products are entirely reputable. We have been thinking mainly of abuses, but many transactions are not open to abuse and are not objectionable. The provisions that we have altered will not affect the legitimate activities of these two organizations, or, I presume, other organizations that are functioning and conducting their operations in the same way.

Amendment carried; clause as amended passed.

Remaining clause (6) and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2).

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

MARKETING OF EGGS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Returned from the Legislative Council without amendment.

ROAD TRAFFIC ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

MAINTENANCE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

In Committee.

(Continued from October 23. Page 1222.)

Clause 10—"Amendment of principal Act, section 102."

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): Last week the Premier suggested that I should not proceed with clauses 10 and 11. Clause 10 seeks to amend section 102 of the Act, which section states:

The court, upon complaint being made in the prescribed form, and upon being satisfied that any child charged with being a destitute child or a neglected child is in fact a destitute child or a neglected child, may—

(a) order such child to be forthwith sent to an institution, to be there detained or otherwise dealt with under this Act until such child attains the age of eighteen years; or

(b) by an order in writing place such child in the custody and under the control of the board until such child attains the age of eighteen years.

Our proposal to add the words "or for such lesser period as the court may order" is not a big amendment, but it is important. If the court, in its wisdom, believes that a child should not be under the control of the Children's Welfare and Public Relief Department until it is 18 years of age, the court should have the right—a right it asks for regularly—to so prescribe.

Mr. Lawn: This only grants the court discretionary power.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: Yes. That is all I seek. I will not persist with clause 11.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): Since this matter was last discussed I have received a minute from the Children's Welfare Department concerning this Bill. The minute states, in effect, that the department's strongly expressed view is that short sentences for juveniles are undesirable on theoretical, welfare and practical grounds. The department asks that this provision be not inserted in the principal Act. It is for the Committee to decide, but the advice of this responsible department should not be lightly regarded. I was happy to hear the Leader announce that he intended not to press clause 11. I ask him to consider eliminating

clause 10 also so that the Bill can go speedily to another place. After all, both clauses are contrary to recent thinking on these matters.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: I disagree with the Premier. I believe that the court should have discretionary power. If a child of 12 years of age is before the court and the magistrate wants to commit the child for a shorter term than that prescribed in the Act, he should have the power to do so. Magistrates are experienced and able people. I suggest that if the Premier looks at page 181 of the 1937 Statutes he will see that this clause is desirable, and I think if the board were properly informed of this amendment it would agree that it was desirable.

Mr. LAWN: The Premier said that the board was a responsible body and that it had suggested that shorter sentences under 18 years of age were undesirable. It appears to me that the board may be under some misapprehension. The Committee is not considering a reduction in the age limit of 18 years: the proposal is to retain the 18 years' age limit. I consider that the court is an even more responsible body than the board, and this clause provides for discretionary power for the court to say whether or not a shorter sentence would not be in the interests of all concerned.

In other instances Parliament has said that the court should have discretionary power. I remember reading in the press that complaints had been made that some sentences were harsh because boys had been committed to the reformatory until they were 18 years of age, but it was pointed out then that the magistrates could not do otherwise. This clause merely gives a magistrate the right to use his discretion regarding whether or not a shorter sentence is desirable. I hope the Committee accepts the clause.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I do not agree with the argument of the member for Adelaide. The court sees the child when it is dealing with the case and committing the child. The board is the authority established for the care and control of the children, and surely it would know how to get the best results. I have the highest respect for our tribunals, but the department is doing this work continually and not without some success; it has the duty of looking after those children, whose welfare is committed to it by Parliament. In its wisdom, Parliament itself made it imperative that those children be committed for a period because it found that the short sentences were not desirable. I can find no reason to go against the

considered and expressed opinion of the department in this matter. The Leader has already signified that he would agree to the deletion of clause 11. I consider it would be a good thing for the Bill to be considered in another place.

Mr. LAWN: The Premier said that the board had the welfare of these children to look after for a considerable period, whereas the court had the child before it for only a short time. Surely it is just as logical to say that the parents of the children concerned have those children before them for years and are looking after their welfare for years, yet would the Premier suggest that when a child comes before the court and the parents get up and say that it is really a good child the parents have a greater knowledge than has the court? In effect, he is saying that the parents have a greater knowledge of the child and should know better than the court what should be done with the child. If the Premier maintains that the department is a greater authority than the court, it could be said with equal conviction that the parents are just as great an authority as is the department, so we might as well forget the court altogether. This is inconsistent with any responsible Government's views.

We set up the courts and appoint magistrates on whom we rely to do the right thing. A murderer is before the court for only a few hours or a couple of days, but the court has discretion in that instance. Surely the court should have discretionary power to commit a child for a lesser period than was previously prescribed. I fail to see the reason for the Premier's objection to this clause, and I fail to see why the board and not the court should be able to make a recommendation in this regard.

Mr. FRANK WALSH: As this Bill must go to another place and be amended there, I will not press this clause or the following clause because I wish the Bill to be passed as soon as possible.

Clause negatived.

Clause 11 negatived.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

EXCESSIVE RENTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 2. Page 925.)

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer): I have not had an opportunity to examine closely all the implications of this Bill, but it seems that the

honourable member is seeking to do four main things. If my assumption is correct, I will deal with these four things and make comments on each as I proceed. The first provision is that the present exemption from the Act of all written agreements of a duration of a year or more should be abolished and, if I understand the Bill correctly, that all rents, notwithstanding that they may be the subject of written agreements covering a year or more, should come under the general provisions of the Act, which provides that anyone who considers his rent is excessive (or words to that effect) has the right to approach the court to get his rent fixed. The Bill provides that all agreements shall come within this general fixation and that there shall be no exemption of this kind. I cannot agree with this provision as it stands. First, it cuts across agreements that have been made while this provision has been in force, and no doubt many agreements have been made because the landlord has been prepared to let his premises under the conditions of the lease knowing that they were the conditions that would apply. This interferes by Act of Parliament with agreements which, when made, were perfectly legal agreements.

Mr. Dunstan: The Housing Improvement Act does that already in certain cases.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: That is probably correct, but on general principles I think that, if I entered into a perfectly legal agreement with the honourable member, it should not be upset by a subsequent Act of Parliament that alters the conditions. That is generally undesirable, and it is the practice of this House to look at matters closely to see if they interfere with established rights. The honourable member has moved to exclude agreements made after the passing of this Bill, and that is different. I would not go that far. I think I should be willing to agree to a period longer than one year: an ordinary lease is usually of a longer period than a year.

I put it to the honourable member that any amendment that may be contemplated of the nature of this amendment should exempt existing agreements—I am not talking about renewals. They may be made for a variety of circumstances of which we have no knowledge, and to alter them peremptorily without any real justification is not good legislation, nor is it legislation which in general principle the honourable member would want to have. If any amendment exempting leases is made, it should be in respect of leases made after this period so that they would be made in

the knowledge that they would be subject to any conditions of the Act which might have some bearing upon them. I suggest to the honourable member that probably a two-year or a three-year period would be appropriate, as a lease for a longer term is obviously not negotiated to get away from the Act.

The second matter dealt with by the Bill is the provision to set aside an order for costs. If I understand this correctly, it means that in any action both sides would be responsible for their own costs. When this Act was last before the House, I said that the Government would be anxious to ensure that the financial strength of one party would not be able to upset the fair result for the other party.

Mr. Ryan: But that has not been carried into effect.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Prices Commissioner was appointed to look after the matter and, as far as I know, this has not been a material point up to the present.

Mr. Dunstan: Many people have not brought cases because they have been frightened that the costs of the other side—not their own costs—would be awarded against them.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Earlier I said that in a case that appeared to be in order the appeal should be made to the court, and that where the financial circumstances of the person concerned were precarious, the Government would consider it. I know of no case of an application being made on the ground of financial hardship. This provision can cut both ways. I am not sure whether under general law the general provision of equity should apply. In any case, the ordering of costs is still subject, I take it, to the usual order of the court, which can, if it so desires, dispose of costs fairly and properly.

Mr. Dunstan: Unless there is such a provision, the court takes it that costs follow the event, except in the most exceptional circumstances.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I should not be averse to putting the issue fairly and squarely to the court that the court shall dispose of costs in what it believes to be an equitable manner. The honourable member for Norwood shakes his head at that. I am not sure what the honourable member is trying to achieve by his amendment. Let me put a hypothetical case to the honourable member. I have a dispute with my landlord, the member for Port Adelaide, about the rent he is charging me for my house. When I tell him that the

rent is excessive he replies that it is not. I then say that I am going to submit it to the court. Under the honourable member's amendment, I submit it to the court; the court decides that it is grossly excessive and reduces the rent, but I still have to pay my half of the court costs. It is a two-edged sword, because in that case I have had to establish my right by law by taking the matter to court, and yet I still have to pay my full costs.

Mr. Ryan: No; you don't have to pay.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I would under the honourable member's amendment.

Mr. Dunstan: If you were suffering financial hardship, you could go to the Prices Commissioner?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: If I understand the honourable member's amendment aright, a successful applicant for rent reduction has to bear the full share of his costs for the court action.

Mr. Dunstan: You might get assistance from the Government!

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: This could only be advanced by the honourable member on the assumption that applications to the court are, more or less, going to be unsuccessful. The honourable member, in bringing the Bill forward, made no secret that he intended to protect people against excessive rents. I believe that I state his objects fairly and properly. This is one of the methods whereby he plans to do that; that is, to go to the court. Incidentally, I believe it is part of the Labor Party's platform that a person who believes he is paying excessive rent should be able to go to a court.

Mr. Lawn: It is nothing like the court you propose.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I understood that members opposite believed that the Act would be permanent and of some lasting benefit. I believe that the Act has been of benefit, because I have noticed with much interest that since the Act was passed, when the cost of living figures come out from quarter to quarter, only a minute alteration, if any at all, has occurred in the rent level.

Mr. Lawn: Do all landlords have to submit their rents to the statistician?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Having had my court case with my landlord and having shown that the rent is grossly excessive, then I have to pay my own costs. I do not believe that that is an improvement on the present law, under which the honourable member for Port Adelaide, my landlord, knows that

I can get an award and he has to pay the cost of my getting it. If I am paying an excessive rent and I know that whatever the court's decision I will still have to pay court costs, then I will continue paying the excessive rent and not take court action, because even if I prove myself 100 per cent right, I still have to pay the court costs under the honourable member's amendment. Under those circumstances I believe the application to the court would be hindered rather than assisted. Perhaps the honourable member may like to reconsider this amendment. Although it is true that a person who is unsuccessful does not pay double costs, it is equally true that one who is successful would still have to meet his own costs. In my opinion that prevents his going to the court and, in many instances, is a determining factor against his going to the court. I appreciate the problem the honourable member is trying to solve. Indeed, when the legislation was first introduced in a recent session I said the Prices Commissioner would be asked to keep a fatherly eye on this matter to see that substantial justice was done.

Clause 5 provides that an officer of the Land Board or of the Prices Commissioner who is a licensed valuer shall report on the various matters that the court has to take into consideration. Investigations reveal that this provision is not practical, and I do not believe it is desirable. The honourable member's purpose in including this provision in his Bill is to provide some easier and less expensive way whereby values might be established. The authorities he has prescribed already have many duties to perform and from a practical viewpoint would not be able to undertake the additional work.

Mr. Dunstan: Then appoint more officers.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: It is extremely difficult to get officers capable of performing this work. No doubt that is one of the reasons why the honourable member is trying to impose the obligation on the Government to supply such authorities. His invitation is declined. If I were the honourable member I would not stress the question of appointing additional officers, because that would involve another consideration—an expenditure on salaries. I remind the honourable member that there are limitations concerning financial Bills.

Clause 6 revives a provision that was in the Landlord and Tenant (Control of Rents) Act. It provides that a tenant shall not be molested or annoyed in the use of the house he occupies. I do not object to this clause. If a person

is paying rent and meeting his obligations under a tenancy agreement he should not be subjected to petty annoyances and minor indignities by a landlord. I believe that this Bill should affect not existing leases but only leases made after the passing of the Bill and after the legislation has been proclaimed. Clause 4 will, on balance, result in heavier costs to a tenant than to a landlord. It is weighted against the tenant, although the honourable member had the opposite intention. It is more difficult for a tenant to meet the costs of proving an excessive rent than for a landlord to meet the costs of refuting such an allegation. Clause 5 is impracticable, although I see no reason for opposing clause 6.

Mr. Lawn: Will you support the second reading?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes, to enable further discussion in Committee on the lines I have suggested.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clauses 1 and 2 passed.

Progress reported; Committee to sit again.

[*Sitting suspended from 5.59 to 7.30 p.m.*]

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD (Premier and Treasurer) moved:

That the Speaker do now leave the chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole for the purpose of considering the following resolution: That it is desirable to introduce a Bill for an Act to amend the Licensing Act, 1932-1960.

Motion carried.

Resolution agreed to in Committee and adopted by the House. Bill introduced and read a first time.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I move:

That this Bill be now read a second time.

It may most conveniently be dealt with under two main headings. The first and most important amendments to the present Act alter the existing basis of licence and permit fees. For publicans' and club licences these fees are based on the annual value of the premises, while for other classes of liquor licence there are fixed fees ranging from £10 to £20 a year. This system is basically unsound and inequitable. It takes no account whatever of the true commercial value of a licence and has meant that many small establishments have in the past paid fees greatly exceeding the fees payable where a larger volume of business is transacted over the same period simply because of the basis on which the fee is

assessed. In future all fees for licences of the various kinds and for permits for liquor with meals will, broadly speaking, be based upon a percentage of the gross amount paid for liquor bought or sold during a preceding year, with a minimum fee of £10 in all cases. The fee will be at a rate of 3 per cent on what is defined as the "gross amount" paid for liquor for the establishment; in computing the amount of the fee, duties other than sales tax are to be included, but packing and delivery and freight charges (which will obviously vary with the situation of the particular premises) are excluded. Regarding the various types of licence other than those for hotels, clubs and restaurants, the fees will, of course, be payable only in respect of sales to persons other than persons licensed or otherwise permitted to sell liquor, because in the case of sales to persons licensed to sell liquor the fee will be charged on those persons and this provision is designed to prevent double payment.

The removal of the present provisions concerning fees for licences and permits are effected by clauses 6 (a), 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 (in part), 19 (a), 21 and 23 (g) (in part). The new substantive provisions concerning the basis of fees chargeable are made by clause 6 (b) (which relates to Wilpena), clause 14 (enacting new sections 30, 31 and 32 concerning fees for all licences), clause 19 (b) (clubs) and clause 23 (h) (restaurant permits). The new method has been used in every other State of the Commonwealth for many years and it is now at almost a standard rate of 6 per cent. Therefore, licence fees in other States have greatly exceeded those in South Australia. If honourable members look at the blue book issued by the Commonwealth Grants Commission they will see that for many years the licence fees in South Australia have been much smaller than the fees payable in the other States.

Mr. Dunstan: And about one-quarter per capita.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: That is correct. The standard fee in the other States is about 18s. a head, whereas the fee for South Australia has worked out at about 4s. 7d. a head. Members will see that the proposed method has been well tried and has become well established in other States, where it has operated for many years. However, the Government, realizing that changing over to a new system would create some difficulties, discussed this matter with the Australian Hotels

Association, and it was agreed that 3 per cent would be a fair and equitable basis. The association was consulted because obviously a change in the pattern of charges would take cash, and the people liable for licence fees would be affected. Although the Government wished the fee to be 4 per cent, it agreed, after discussing the matter with the association, to submit to Parliament the present Bill based on a figure of 3 per cent. Although the cash involved is not identified in the Treasury as cash, this is the additional taxation measure introduced by the Government to provide the amount required to give the concessions granted by the Government in the Budget in relation to succession duties. In other words, this taxation measure was proposed to be offset by the concessions granted to widows in particular and to children inheriting small estates. In broad principle, these sums will balance.

In connection with the foregoing amendments, I mention the necessary administrative provisions enacted by the Bill. New section 31 provides that the Licensing Court shall finally and conclusively fix the amount of the fees payable, with power to review, fixing a reasonable fee where no or insufficient information is available. All suppliers of liquor may be required to provide full information as to liquor supplied by them, and an applicant for a new licence must furnish such particulars as may be required to enable the court to make an estimate. In the case of applications for renewal, applicants are to furnish statutory declarations setting forth their purchases, the persons from whom liquor was obtained, and the gross amounts paid. Similar details are required of applicants for transfers, and, in the case of death of a licensee or other specified events, details of liquor purchased before the happening of the event are required. These matters are provided for in new sections 31 and 32. They are applied with the necessary modifications to Wilpena (clause 6 (b) in part) and to restaurants (clause 23 (h) in part, and (i) and (j)).

In regard to restaurants, provision is made for permits to terminate on January 31 in each year instead of at any time during the year as at present, so that when the court is required to fix the permit fee it will have a firm date from which to operate; to safeguard the position of existing permittees whose permits expire at various times new subsection (4e) of section 197a entitles them to a refund of a proportion of fees already paid to cover any unexpired period of their existing licences as on January 31 next.

Other administrative and ancillary provisions are made by clauses 16 (concerning procedure on the grant of licences); 17 (expressly enabling the court to call evidence relating to the fixing of licence fees); 22 (reducing additional bar-room fees from £15 to £1 in view of the changed basis of licence fees); 31 (empowering inspectors by the direction of the court to inspect and examine books and records); and 32 (reducing the fees for booth certificates, which were raised in 1956 to the lower amounts provided by the principal Act). Members will see that some administrative problems are associated with this matter, but I assure them that every care has been taken to consult the Australian Hotels Association about this matter, and extensive discussions have been held about the best way to bring the new principles into operation so that they will not cause unnecessary work or difficulty.

Another set of provisions will enable the payment of licence fees, including club registrations but not billiard table or packet licences, to be made quarterly. At present only publicans enjoy this privilege. In view of the increased amounts that will be payable, it has been thought reasonable to extend this privilege to other licensees, and provision is accordingly made by new section 30 (5) (inserted by clause 14), and clauses 15, 16 (b), 19 (b) and 20. The second set of provisions of the Bill make certain important amendments in regard to hours for the supply and consumption of liquor.

The Government has taken the opportunity, while this Bill is before the House, to make several suggestions for alterations to the general licensing law, as several requests have been made to the Government about this matter. The Government has sorted out these matters and discussed them with officers from the Licensing Branch and, as a result, has introduced several amendments which, although they go further than some people would desire, I think do not go as far as others would desire. The amendments may be classified as those which the Government believes can be accepted without in any way causing serious upset to the drinking habits of the people but which will be beneficial and will be generally appreciated by the public.

In the first place, the evening hours for hotels and restaurants (including Wilpena) are extended from the present 10 p.m. to 10.45 p.m., with the existing half-hour's grace. What I have just said applies to liquor sold and supplied in dining rooms with meals; it does not mean an extension of bar trade. These

amendments are made by clauses 6 (c) (Wilpena), 23 (k) (restaurants) and 24 (a) and (c) (hotels). Clauses 24 (b), 28 (a) and 29 (a) relate to the serving of liquor with lunch at hotels on days other than ordinary days, at present limited to the hours between 1 p.m. and 2.30 p.m. Hotels are required by the Act to supply lunch on demand from 12.30 p.m., and it is anomalous that if a person requires a meal at 12.30 p.m. on a day other than an ordinary day the licensee must refuse to serve him with liquor with his lunch before 1 o'clock. Clauses 28 (b), 29 (b) and 30 make consequential amendments in relation to hours.

A further amendment is made by clause 23 (1), which will enable restaurants holding a 'liquor with meals' permit to serve wines with Christmas dinner between 1 p.m. and 3.30 p.m. and between 6 p.m. and 10.45 p.m. Two further amendments to the law the Government regards as important are made by clauses 26 and 33. Clause 26 will enable the service of liquor with light meals in hotels or clubs (except on Sunday, Good Friday and Christmas Day) between the hours during which liquor may be served on those premises with normal meals. Many years ago an amendment was moved by, I think, the present Leader of the Opposition when a Licensing Act Amendment Bill was before the House to permit liquor to be served at functions for which a permit had been granted by a justice of the peace. From memory, I think the permit fee was £1. For many years people holding evening functions have had to go through the nominal procedure of applying to a justice to get a permit to hold an evening function at which liquor has been served with meals.

Mr. Frank Walsh: And paying a fee of 30s.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: The Leader obviously knows more about this than I do. This provision has led to many applications before the justices' court involving a tremendous amount of work, with hotels and restaurants paying a large sum in fees. For every party a separate fee has to be paid, and in some instances, where two persons attend a function requiring the serving of liquor a special permit has to be paid for. The first provision the Government has included (the service of liquor up to 10.45 p.m., with an additional half-hour to consume the liquor), will, I believe, mean that many permits now applied for will be found unnecessary. Most functions terminate at about 11 p.m., and this provision will actually relieve hotels and

restaurants of a considerable expense that they have incurred in charges. I suppose, when a hotel pays the permit fee—

Mr. Frank Walsh: The customer always pays.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: This will relieve the customer, if not the hotel, of paying the special permit fee. Initially it provided for the sale of liquor until 10.45 p.m. and its consumption until 11 p.m. That was opposed by officers of the Licensing Branch with knowledge of these matters. They informed the Government that a quarter of an hour would not be a reasonable time in which to consume a bottle of wine.

The officers considered that half an hour should be allowed. Subject to the approval of the Licensing Court and the provision of a special room for the purpose, liquor may be served in the evening with a light meal described as a meal costing at least 7s. 6d.

Mr. Bywaters: Is it necessary to sit down or stand up for that meal?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: It is subject to the provisions of what the Licensing Court regard as a fair thing. I have no inhibitions about whether diners stand up or sit down. I do not think that the provision will be abused. Honourable members may shake their heads, but I believe it will not be abused. It will be used frequently by people who attend the pictures or an evening function, who do not wish to sit down to a full dinner, but who want light refreshments. I believe that the light refreshments now available in hotels have been much appreciated by patrons. That is my experience. This provision will be subject to the control of the Licensing Court, and will probably benefit the public.

As in the case of meal permits, a special permit will be required, and the light meal must be served in a specified room on the premises other than the dining rooms or bar rooms and the light meal must cost not less than 7s. 6d. Provision is made that on request a person must be served with a light meal whether or not he desires to partake of liquor with it, and a light meal for this purpose is not to be regarded as a meal for the purposes of the provision of the Licensing Act requiring a licensee to supply a meal on demand. Having regard to the large amount of administrative work which will fall upon the Licensing Court and its officers, the provisions of this clause, concerning permits to supply liquor with light meals, will not come into force until a date proclaimed by the Governor (clause 2

(2)). Clause 33 will empower the making of regulations fixing the sizes of glasses and other containers in which liquor is supplied for consumption on the premises, and for the identification and the exclusive use of any containers which are prescribed. This is regarded as an important amendment, experience having shown that measures in use in this State, and particularly in the metropolitan area, are by no means uniform. Many types of imported glass container are available and a publican can, without desiring to, infringe in providing liquor to the public. Imported glasses that were tested were found to vary, some of a batch being over-sized and some very much under-sized.

Mr. Jennings: I bet there were more of the latter.

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: I would not know that, as I cannot speak from the honourable member's experience. Although we have provided under the Weights and Measures Act that every type of commodity must be sold according to a standard, no standard has been prescribed by law for liquor glasses. I inquired of people associated with the industry and found a considerable lack of knowledge as to what should be contained in a given measure of liquor or beer. Honourable members and the public generally will appreciate that a standard will apply. Up to the present the position has been covered by regulations made by the Australian Hotels Association. I believe that it has had trouble doing this, as a test revealed considerable variation from place to place.

Mr. Frank Walsh: Are the glasses to be stamped as they are in other States?

The Hon. Sir THOMAS PLAYFORD: Yes. It is not the Government's desire capriciously to put the industry to a heavy expense. If this legislation is accepted by the House the Government will consult with the association on bringing this provision into effect. If we capriciously demanded that all glasses be changed to the new standards overnight, it would be expensive. Further, sufficient glasses could not be provided immediately. If this is accepted, the Government will negotiate with the association about the date by which it will bring in the regulations so that there will be a gradual change-over, as has been the case in other States. I think that other States provide for standard measures and for the standard measures to be stamped on the glasses.

I deal now with some drafting and minor amendments made by the Bill. The first of

these is made by clause 5 which removes the definition of "mead, wine, cider and perry" now expressly limited to liquor made from fruit grown or produced in the State. It may surprise members to learn that the provisions of the Licensing Act refer throughout to "liquor" which is defined as including mead, wine, cider and perry, but these terms are in turn so defined as to omit imported liquor of those types. This curious gap in the law appears to have existed for many years and the opportunity is now being taken of removing it. I understand that at some recent "Old English" functions in South Australia mead was served and met with some demand. I believe it is possible that mead will be manufactured in South Australia by a reputable firm. If it is, I know that that will be of particular interest to the member for Victoria (Mr. Harding) because it will represent another outlet for the product of the honey bee.

Clause 18 also removes a gap in the law. Under section 70 of the principal Act a person who, because of some illness, accident or misadventure, fails to apply for a renewal of his licence at the proper time, can obtain a certificate to carry on until the next quarterly meeting of the court. On being given the certificate he pays his licence fee or (in the case of a publican's licence) the first quarterly instalment. However, section 70 goes on to provide that if the court at its next meeting grants a renewal of the licence no further fee is payable for the rest of the year. Clause 18 remedies this defect by requiring payment of the remaining instalments for the whole year.

Another series of amendments of an administrative character are made by clause 23 (a), (f), (g), (m) and (n) which will substitute for "any" special magistrate the Licensing Court as the authority to deal with restaurant permits. These amendments are consequential upon the new general scheme under which the Licensing Court will fix licensing and permit fees, and it is clearly appropriate that applications, which are required to be lodged with the Clerk of the Licensing Court, and other matters in connection with restaurant permits should be dealt with by the court and not by "any" special magistrate.

Further amendments made by clause 23 (b), (c), (d) and (e) will remove the present limitations upon the serving of liquor with meals at restaurants under which only dry wines and cider containing a certain percentage of proof spirit can be served. Under the amendments any Australian wines or cider can be served and

provision is made for the serving of mead and perry if required. Two further minor amendments are made by clauses 24 (d) (altering the fee for permits to supply liquor with meals from £1 1s. to £1 with a view to the transition to decimal currency) and 16 (d) abolishing the fee of 2s. 6d. payable on the issue of a licence. Clause 27 makes a necessary drafting amendment to section 199b.

The last amendment to which I refer is made by clause 25 which amends section 198a. That section permits a licensee to supply liquor to up to six non-excepted persons at the expense of a *bona fide* lodger from outside the State. This means that a hotel lodger, who happens to live in South Australia, cannot entertain his guests under that section. Clause 25 removes the residential qualification. It means that any *bona fide* lodger will be able to entertain six guests at his own expense in a hotel. The present provision is most anomalous. For instance, if a person from Port Augusta registered at an Adelaide hotel he could not entertain guests, but a man from just over the Victorian border could register at a Mount Gambier hotel and entertain guests. This provision was originally included in the legislation to see what would happen. No abuses have taken place and the Government does not believe it necessary or desirable to retain it. A *bona fide* lodger will now be able to enjoy the same privileges as those enjoyed by visitors from other States and from overseas.

I have outlined in general terms the provisions of the Bill with appropriate references to the clauses. There are two comments which I should like to make. The first is that the new basis of licence fees will, as I have already said, provide for more equitable assessments as between various licensees. This system has been in operation in all of the other States for a number of years and has worked well. I do not believe that there will be any objection to it in principle. The rate suggested is 3 per cent (in other States it is higher, being 6 per cent in the majority, if not all, of them).

My second comment is—and I do not go into detail on this point—that the provisions relating to fees have been based upon other States' provisions that have been upheld by the High Court as valid. No radical departure from the scheme or language as used elsewhere has been made in this Bill, although some slight variations have been necessary having regard to the basic provisions of our own Act. I would therefore urge upon members that they accept or reject the scheme as it stands and

not seek to introduce serious amendments or modifications which might result in the rejection of the whole scheme upon the grounds of contravention of the Commonwealth Constitution. This matter was challenged in other States on, I think, three occasions. Incidentally it is interesting to note that in the High Court action the Commonwealth Government intervened on behalf of the States. It has been held by a majority decision of the High Court to be valid legislation. I hope that members will not seek to amend it because if they do, and are successful, it will leave the legislation open to challenge.

The Government has conferred with persons associated with the liquor industry to determine whether the provisions contained in this Bill are satisfactory and do not present any problem. I am happy to announce that we have been able to reach substantial agreement on the provisions. As I have said, we have had requests to go even further than we have gone and to liberalize the Act further. However, I believe the proposed provisions are completely supported by the industry concerned.

Mr. FRANK WALSH secured the adjournment of the debate.

RIVER MURRAY WATERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Adjourned debate on second reading.

(Continued from October 29. Page 1287.)

Mr. FRANK WALSH (Leader of the Opposition): As I was not able to obtain a copy of this Bill until after today's dinner adjournment I have not had much opportunity to consider it. However, the schedule attached to the Bill and other matters associated with it firmly indicate that tremendous thought was given to this measure prior to its introduction. The Bill concerns the Parliaments of the Commonwealth and of other States besides South Australia, and it has been ratified by the Prime Minister and the Premiers of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

What concerns me at present is a matter that is not dealt with in the Bill. I refer to the question of the type of retaining wall that will be needed. I visited the site in order to get some idea of where the construction will take place, and on my return to Renmark I was asked whether the area would be cleared before the construction of the dam took place. Also, I gained the impression from the Minister's second reading explanation that the soil was perhaps not ideal. I am also concerned regarding the construction methods that will

be used. However, this project will result generally in valuable conservation of water. Such a storage as this is urgently needed, and I believe that in time this State will be confronted with the need for further conservation elsewhere.

Some people suggest that a tremendous quantity of water is now running out to sea. Even when this dam is filled, much water will still run freely to the sea, but this dam will no doubt impound most valuable water supplies. I think that the project is of vital importance to this State, and that the appropriate authorities should be commended for the way the matter has been handled. I support the second reading.

Mr. SHANNON (Onkaparinga): It is with much pleasure that I support the measure. I pay a tribute to the Premier for his long and energetic advocacy of South Australia's needs in this field. Everybody calls Australia the dry continent, and everyone who knows Australia knows that South Australia is the driest State of that dry continent. The Premier, more than any other man in history, I think, in charge of affairs of state has appreciated that the time will come when there will be a limit to what we can do about increasing our population and finding suitable and gainful employment for the increased population as time goes by. Of course, one fundamental is water.

We have heard much rather ill-informed criticism of the Chowilla dam, and I have read letters to the press that I consider to be off the beam regarding what will happen when the dam is constructed. The proposed dam covers a large area. We have no very deep gorges in the Murray Valley in which a reservoir can be built, so of necessity we will have some shallow areas in this large stretch of land that the dam will occupy. It has been suggested that we will have by evaporation a consolidation of the solids in the water, and that the water will become so saline as to affect the productivity of the soil upon which it is used. Unhappily for those critics, we have had experience in this field already. As the Minister pointed out, the Victorian dam has been a most effective test of what happens to water when it is stored.

The Premier, in putting forward our case, was no doubt guided by the best Australian authority on the River Murray. I refer to Mr. J. R. Dridan, our Engineer-in-Chief, who has made a close study of the river, its habits, and its potential. Fortunately for South Australia, we have had people of long vision in charge of this department who have looked

forward to our future in this State and have tried to provide for our future growth. We all know that this department has harnessed virtually all the natural sources of supply available in the very meagre volume South Australia offers for such conservation. We are now back to what is really fundamentally our major source of supply, namely, the River Murray. This river, our life-line, will be our major source of supply for all time. I think the critics of this scheme have failed to appreciate that the water that evaporates from the impounded area, if it did not evaporate at that spot, would flow into the sea if it were allowed to flow freely through.

Finally, I do not know what the Leader of the Opposition meant when he said we have to supply some water to flow through to the sea. I hope we will not have to do that. I think the time will come when we will not be able to afford anything for poor old Mother Sea.

Mr. Ferguson: We may be taking it back.

Mr. SHANNON: Yes, we may have to take water from the sea and desalinate it to make good our deficiency. Obviously we cannot afford to let go to the sea any water that we can economically impound.

Mr. Harding: Perhaps it will be necessary to desalinate the River Murray.

Mr. SHANNON: Locks have been constructed on the River Murray to impound water, and we get it in a condition that allows it to be used for irrigation. It is also used for human consumption; it is pumped from Mannum and Morgan, and I hope within a few years it will be pumped from Murray Bridge. I assure the honourable member that the people concerned with this project have had due regard to the condition of the water that will be available from the River Murray for our domestic requirements. However, more than domestic requirements are involved in the Chowilla dam, and this is one reason why I wanted to speak on this measure. I have observed some work done on the higher levels adjacent to the river on land which a few years ago—a decade at the most—was considered to be outside the economic range of practical irrigation. Because of the high lift obtainable from the new pumps available, which can lift water 130ft., 140ft., and even 150ft., this land has been irrigated.

The Hon. G. G. Pearson: With cheaper electricity.

Mr. SHANNON: I was coming to that. I think the Government can be thanked for extending electricity supplies throughout the

Murray Valley, where the potential is as yet untouched. Anybody who traverses the Murray Valley and looks at what is happening as a result of the efforts of a few people who, by their own resources, are using high-level land for irrigation purposes, must appreciate the potential. The land is of even quality. Some of it is ideal for irrigation and it grows remarkable crops of vegetables and fodder grasses for stock. I have seen the property of one man who has a large holding of dry country north of the river with a limited natural rainfall (it is under 8in. in some places) and who has irrigated lucerne on a few hundred acres of his property, which has permitted him to treble his stock-carrying capacity. These things are now observable, and everyone realizes they are practicable. All we are lacking is the assurance of a sufficient volume of water that we can take from the river. The Chowilla dam provides that.

I do not think there is any argument that this dam may be only the first stage in the conservation of water from the Murray Valley. We shall have to consider what the Premier has already discussed and what some of his critics thought he was using as a stick to beat the Eastern States into submission—the Teal Flat proposal. This proposal is entirely within the borders of this State, and no agreement would have been necessary with the Eastern States or the Commonwealth Government for this State to go it alone. It would have been a costly project, of course. I believe that the River Murray Commission, if it is looking at this matter in a national way (as it must do) must consider Teal Flat as the next site. We still have not finished conserving water. Lake Albert will finally be sealed off. The water flowing into it is practically lost, although a little is used for irrigation.

Mr. Nankivell: A considerable dairying industry depends on it for irrigation purposes.

Mr. SHANNON: As the member representing the district is an expert agriculturist I shall not quarrel with him; I sometimes listen to him to get a few tips on this problem. In this field, I think he will appreciate that about 90 per cent of the water that flows into Lake Albert evaporates: it is a shallow lake. Unfortunately, the country under the lake is not fertile, but I have been assured by people who have been investigating this problem that it will pay handsomely to save the water that flows into the lake to be used on areas near the river for irrigation purposes so that we can get a still greater effect from the

intense culture available in the Murray Valley. I know that people have talked about the Murray Valley for many years. Some people have almost devoted their lives to talking the development of the Murray Valley, and they have not all been fools. Some of them may have been looking further ahead than the generation they were talking to could see, but finally their vision of development and the potential of the Murray Valley have been realized in relation to population and carrying capacity; possibly the valley will be developed beyond their wildest dreams.

In some respects the River Murray is to South Australia almost as the Nile is to Egypt. Of course, this State has only the tail end of the river, and it is up to us to make the maximum use of what we can get. I think the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority must provide the water that will eventually come to South Australia, and we cannot afford to let it go to waste. It would be a policy of despair for us to say that we had reached our limits and could not afford to go further. We cannot afford not to go further in this matter.

I have investigated several projects (albeit not as large as this) for various types of structure for damming streams, and I can say that the Government was wise in sending Mr. Dridan and one of his senior officers overseas to investigate the latest methods applied to this form of reservoir construction or damming of streams for water conservation. An earth-fill dam was constructed at South Para after an investigation was held concerning the Eildon dam in Victoria, so what was decided finally was reasonably certain to succeed. This method was used and, as we all know, the South Para reservoir has been filled and we are happy with the result. The dam seems to be holding water as does a bottle. I do not know whether a similar construction will be used at Chowilla, nor am I concerned about the type of structure. I believe that the people who are guiding us in this matter will be sufficiently well-informed to ensure that the dam will be efficient and do the job for which it is designed. It is a big project, but after all, about £14,000,000 is not a frightening sum when one considers what will happen down the ages with the return from that expenditure and with the water that will be available to the residents of this State for all time. It is a small burden, (if we may call it that) to pay the interest on our investment in this water supply. The maintenance of the dam will not be a large

item. The major capital expenditure in the first construction is borne equally by the three States and the Commonwealth. The River Murray Waters Agreement was entered into many years ago by States using Murray water. That was a far-sighted accomplishment. I am convinced that, if the spirit activating the people who founded that agreement continues, the water available for South Australian development from the River Murray will immensely benefit generations still unborn. I am not one of those die-hard Conservatives who think that we should spend money only as we have it to spend, and should not go too deeply into debt in this field. This is a field in which courage is required. We have to take time by the forelock and to act promptly to provide for future development. As Adelaide proper is developing the opportunity for extensive cultivation on the Adelaide Plains is vanishing, with people living on valuable land that helped to feed us not so many years ago. I am sure the Adelaide Hills area cannot take the place of the plains and we will have to rely on the Murray Valley. The member for Stuart (Mr. Riches) no doubt is thinking of Port Pirie, an area that is doing something and will need to do more. It will have to produce tomatoes, peas and beans which can be grown there successfully and which will be required for the growing population.

It is with pleasure that I compliment the Government on bringing to fruition what some people thought was the Premier's pipe dream. I was one who had faith in him. I know his tenacity and when he knows a good thing it takes much to talk him out of it. He knew that this was a good thing and he stuck to it. We owe a debt of gratitude to our leader and to the department responsible for the planning of this dam, the Engineering and Water Supply Department, and the Engineer-in-Chief (Mr. Dridan). This is a major achievement of this Parliament and presents an opportunity for almost an unlimited increase in the development for both primary production and for industry.

Mr. CURREN (Chaffey): As the member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) pointed out, the Chowilla dam is a major project in conserving water in the Murray-Darling River systems. I have been brought up on the river: I was born there 49 years ago and any project that conserves River Murray water has my full support. The member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) said that it was one of the most far-sighted projects

of water conservation, and in that respect it ranks with the far-sighted Snowy Mountains hydro-electric scheme instituted a few years ago. Several points about this proposed dam have been criticized. I have spoken to the Minister about what I consider to be some expected disadvantages of the area to be inundated. The matter of weed growth has been brought to my notice by officers of the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, who have had much experience in water courses and dams.

This matter will have to be rigidly and carefully controlled. Various types of weed growth live in water, namely, cumbungi and water hyacinth, and between them they could choke the Chowilla dam as they have choked the Kariba dam in Africa. I make that point because much of the area is covered with timber at present, and the Engineer-in-Chief has said that it will not be cleared. I consider that unless it is patrolled effectively it will prove to be a place where weed growth can become established and, once established, it will be difficult and costly to eradicate. I am not trying to dam the project, but that suggestion should be considered. Maintaining the water flow in the river below the dam interests me and all fruitgrowers on the river because, if the quality of water flowing past our irrigation pumps is not of sufficiently low salt content, the plantings are affected by salt burn. About 12 months ago the deciduous plantings on the settlement at Cooltong were irrigated with sprinkler irrigation with an excessive salt content in the water, and the irrigation had to be stopped because the trees were being burned. Although it is well to criticize a flow of water in the river, for the sake of the irrigation settlements it should be maintained. The fact that a large body of water will be impounded leads to the thought that there could be a big expansion in citrus plantings along the river. I understand that a big market for citrus products will become available soon in the United States of America. Within the last 12 months a big area of citrus plantings in Texas was killed by a freeze. My information is that it will not be replanted because about every 10 years the trees are killed by freezes. In California an area of thousands of acres of citrus trees has been grubbed out to make way for housing development. If citrus plantings are expanded in the Murray Valley, they will become one of the major users of the water impounded in the Chowilla dam. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

Mr. LAUCKE (Barossa): I, too, have much pleasure in supporting the Bill. We have before us, as it were, a *fait accompli*. We have an agreement that is the result of intense endeavour on the part of the Premier, who had the backing of the technical knowledge of one of the finest and most able engineers in Australia, Mr. Dridan. So, this evening, whilst we have before us a complete agreement requiring ratification, it behoves us to pay a tribute to those who brought about this situation. Water is undoubtedly the lifeblood of South Australia. We tend to take for granted the facility of turning on a tap almost anywhere in the State to get water, yet this is the driest State in an extremely dry continent.

The agreement before us is an epoch-making document. It will ensure that there shall be no recession in this State's development because of a shortage of water. Undoubtedly the limiting factor to our great growth has been a shortage of water. An occasion such as this calls for words of commendation for those who have persevered, have had the imagination to see the need well ahead of actual usage, and have planned a storage capacity equal to our future demands. With the Chowilla dam about to become a reality we have an assured future. As I support the Bill I commend the Minister of Works, his staff, the Premier and the engineers for that which has been arrived at.

Mr. BYWATERS (Murray): I am happy to support this Bill. Members will recall that some years ago the Premier found it necessary to issue a writ in the High Court concerning an agreement between the New South Wales, Victorian and Commonwealth Governments over the use of River Murray water. A real threat was being held over South Australia at that time. I can vividly recall the then Leader of the Opposition, the late Mr. O'Halloran, assuring the Premier that the Labor Party would support any action to safeguard South Australia's interests. He also assured the Premier of our support for any attempts to conserve water—one such proposal being the Chowilla dam.

This evening we heard a good speech from the member for Onkaparinga (Mr. Shannon) who dealt extensively with the State's need for water, particularly along the reaches of the River Murray. One had to agree with what he said. I have frequently been at variance with the honourable member, but tonight I wholeheartedly support his remarks. We all recognize South Australia's need for water and we all agree that the Chowilla dam is essential.

We were disappointed when originally a hold-up seemed likely because New South Wales was reluctant to enter the agreement. I appreciate the difficulties confronting New South Wales at that time. Having been over the Snowy Mountains scheme, I realize the need for the Blowering dam.

Mr. Nankivell: The Blowering dam was part of the original scheme.

Mr. BYWATERS: Yes. However, the problem was resolved by the Commonwealth Government's enabling the New South Wales Government to pay its share of the cost over a period. It was suggested by Mr. Shannon that some people had thought the Teal Flat dam proposal was used as a means of applying pressure on the other States to persuade them to agree to the Chowilla dam, but I do not think that was entirely so. The Teal Flat site was an alternative. Had the Chowilla dam proposal not been accepted, the Teal Flat dam would have proceeded. Teal Flat is in my district and I knew of the concern expressed there when it was mentioned as a possible site for a dam. Electricity had just been supplied to the area and production was increasing at Walker Flat, Purnong and Young-husband. In recent years tremendous changes have taken place on the banks of the River Murray. Lucerne flats, vegetable gardens and orchards have been established. These all illustrate the need for water and for irrigation. With the advent of electricity that need has been accentuated. That progress is good to see, because prior to that it was rather distressing to take a boat trip along the river, particularly the lower reaches, and to see lying idle land much of which was sandy and drifting. This should never be allowed in a country such as Australia, and it was something that caused alarm among many people associated with the river, including me.

The member for Chaffey (Mr. Curren) said a short time ago that he had been a river man all his life. I cannot make that boast, for I have been in the river districts only 16 or 17 years. However, in that time I have become a very strong advocate of the river; members of this House probably think I am too strong an advocate of it, but I maintain that its importance should be stressed often. The river has become close to my heart. I consider that the future of food production in Australia lies near the River Murray. We know that it is far cheaper to produce alongside water resources than it is to pump water

long distances. We know, too, that in the future, regardless of what members of this House think or do, great irrigation undertakings will come into existence along the River Murray, particularly in the lower reaches. I have predicted in the past—and I do it again now—that vegetable growing will be conducted mostly in the lower reaches of the River Murray. Therefore, we need to conserve water, and because of this fact alone I am happy to see that the Chowilla dam will now become an established fact.

The Minister in his second reading explanation referred to the size of the dam, which will be the biggest in Australia and will hold back a tremendous quantity of water. It has been suggested that evaporation will take place, and no doubt that will be so. Wherever a bulk of water is held there will be evaporation, particularly where water is shallow, as it will be in places in this dam. However, I consider that that is something that we will just have to put up with. In any event, as has been pointed out, a tremendous quantity of water has been running into the sea each year. It has been estimated that South Australia has used only about one-third of her water resources and that much of the remainder has run into the sea. That may have been so in the past, but I do not think that it will be so in the future. I consider that in a few years' time we will be using every drop of water we can lay our hands on; therefore, it is essential that we conserve it.

It has been suggested on occasions that we are not making full use of our river for transportation purposes. We know that at one time much produce was transported down the river by paddle steamer, which I consider would still be the cheapest means of transport. Although we have no port associated with the River Murray, suggestions have been made that one could be built inside the river mouth.

Mr. Freebairn: The honourable member has been carried away by the *Marion*.

Mr. BYWATERS: No, I would not say that. It is a pity that the paddle steamer is a thing of the past. The *Marion* made her last voyage to her final resting place at Mannum, and it has been suggested that that fact should be exploited as publicity for the introduction of a passenger boat on the river. I think it is essential that we have something of world class to transport passengers along this beautiful waterway. No doubt the *Coonawarra* is providing such a service, but it is not adequate on present world standards and I consider that it is necessary to build a modern

boat to provide for something that would prove a great attraction, namely, the use of the river for passenger transport. This could apply also to goods traffic. A plan has been suggested for a port inside the River Murray mouth. Ports have been built inside the river mouths in Europe, where practically all the industries are associated with the major rivers. Industries are established naturally along river banks and goods easily transported by river. I consider that there is a need for this important means of transport, and that we have not used the river as we should have used it over the years; after all, we locked the river for that purpose but, after we had done that, the transport ceased, and that is a pity.

Mr. Nankivell: It assured a water level for irrigation.

Mr. BYWATERS: Yes, and we are very pleased about that. However, that was not the major reason for locking the river: it was done for the purposes of transport. The locking of the river is most essential for keeping levels, and it is also essential for maintaining a flow to conserve the water and to keep the salinity down. I believe the Chowilla dam will serve a purpose in that regard as well, for it will create a flow to provide freshenings when the river is low. We must have running water in the river if we are to maintain the necessary quality of water. I have been amused at times to hear of complaints in this House and elsewhere about weeds growing in country districts, allegedly as a result of the use of River Murray water. Many constituents in my district would be glad to grow weeds from the river water. As the Minister said, River Murray water is being reticulated to large areas in South Australia, and will be reticulated farther in years to come. I hope to see the time when much of the back mallee country will have water reticulated right through it so that its people can enjoy some of the privileges associated with modern living. I do not intend to delay the House any longer on this matter. I support the Bill, as all members on this side do, knowing full well its need and its urgency. We look forward to the day when members of this Parliament will attend the opening of the Chowilla dam.

Mr. RICHES (Stuart): It gives all members much satisfaction to know that agreement can be reached between Governments on such important issues as the distribution of water from a river like the River Murray. History has shown that peoples can go to war in dry countries over the distribution of waters

that are so important—waters that become the lifeblood of the community. It has been amply demonstrated this evening that reasonable people and reasonable Governments may get together and agree on something that will afford satisfaction on a Commonwealth-wide basis, as well as satisfaction to South Australia itself. This matter is way above Party politics, and we are glad that the Parliaments of Australia can rise above Party politics when an issue of such importance, a work of such magnitude, is placed before them.

The agreement we are ratifying has apparently met with the approval of both Parties in the Parliaments of the Commonwealth and of the States of New South Wales and Victoria, and I am sure that as the Premier entered into negotiations on the part of South Australia he did it with the full knowledge that he had the backing of all South Australians. I have risen to add my thanks to those who have been responsible for the completion of this agreement and to remind the House that the Chowilla dam is as vitally important to the northern parts of the State as it is to the Murray Valley. We all depend on the River Murray; possibly the farther away from it we are the more we depend on it, and we recognize that.

Mr. McKee: We do not mind the weed, either.

Mr. RICHES: No, we do not. The member for Onkaparinga said that in the Flinders Ranges foothills increased production should take place. Until we can solve the problem of distributing fruit and vegetables, I believe it is cheaper to pump water to the places of production than to take the fruit to the population. The mark-up between the price of production and the price paid by consumers in the northern areas of this State is terrific—at least 150 per cent. This focuses attention on the potential of the Flinders Ranges foothills as future places of production, not for export but for consumption in the immediate areas of Port Pirie, Whyalla, Port Augusta and places north.

I have not had an earlier opportunity to speak for and on behalf of producers in the Flinders Ranges foothills who, I believe, have had a raw deal. After the First World War, areas at Beetaloo were taken over by the Government and soldiers were settled on fruit blocks in the Beetaloo Valley, which was supplied with water from the Beetaloo reservoir. As there was adequate water then, these men prospered but, as industry increased, water was taken away from the primary producers to supply the cities, and the blocks gradually

disappeared. Orange groves that had produced some of the best fruit in South Australia were allowed to revert to sheep production, which was a retrograde step. The price paid for water for irrigation in the Beetaloo Valley is out of all proportion to that paid for water on fruit blocks in any other part of the State. The future provision of water for these areas should be secured, if the gardens can be kept in production until water from the Chowilla dam is available.

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: They cannot do much until they revitalize the blocks.

Mr. RICHES: If the Minister can find time, I ask him to look at the situation there.

The Hon. P. H. Quirke: I know that area.

Mr. RICHES: Every Minister who has visited that area appreciates the problem while he is on the spot and expresses sympathy with the blockers, but still no relief is given, and some blockers are getting past despondency. South Australia has done a better job in distributing water than has any other country I have seen. I do not think that any other country has a record as good as ours in making water available from the river, and I am glad that this agreement will secure for the future an adequate water supply.

Mr. McANANEY (Stirling): As the representative of a district in the lower reaches of the Murray, I commend the Premier and all those who have had the great foresight and tenacity of purpose that has led to the signing of this agreement, which we all readily endorse. I live in an area where irrigation is playing a big part. It is on the outskirts of the lake, and unfortunately does not contain some of the better soil. It is necessary to go back a mile or two from the edges of the lake into the river areas of the Bremer and the Angas to get beautiful soil that has tremendous potential. In my maiden speech recently I said that at this stage individual production was the best. If full use is to be made of this water, we should already be planning for it to be brought on to the plains so that production can take place there when the needs of Adelaide demand it. As the previous speaker has said, transport has a big bearing on the cheap delivery of goods to the Adelaide market.

The area about which I am speaking is close to Adelaide, and I think that is where production should take place. The land around the immediate shores is not of the best quality, but scientists are doing a splendid job in developing it. A 100-acre garden near my place was brought into production recently. All the local people thought the scientists were

wasting time trying to grow vegetables in the area as it was salty. However, the scientists have proved us wrong: they have put hundreds of tons of gypsum on the land and have used modern procedures and technical knowledge. The first crop is being produced now, and it seems that the venture will be highly productive.

Bringing down supplies of water from the Chowilla dam to keep the lake at its present level will be of tremendous value to my district. The fact that water has been kept there for the last 20 years by the barrages has improved the edges of the lake considerably. The other day, I noticed that a fisherman was growing geraniums on the edge of the lake in a place that two or three years ago would grow only samphire.

The member for Murray (Mr. Bywaters) spoke about passenger boats on the River Murray. A few years ago I travelled up the river by passenger steamer. I travelled not in the *Marion* but in the *Gem*. In those days it was an interesting trip, and I am sure it would be of national benefit if a passenger boat with modern conveniences were provided so that the people of this and other States could travel on our marvellous river. People would then appreciate what is being done, apart from enjoying the beautiful scenery on that trip. I heartily endorse everything said by previous speakers: this is a proud moment for the persons responsible for the Chowilla dam project, and a momentous hour for the people of this State who are conscious of the benefit they will derive from the use of this extra water.

Mrs. STEELE (Burnside): I did not intend to speak but as the debate has progressed I have realized that all the previous speakers have been from the country, mostly from the areas bordering the River Murray. No metropolitan member has spoken, although city people will derive great benefit also from the construction of this dam. It is with much gratification that every member sees the culmination of the negotiations and the investigations that have gone on over the years since the building of this dam was first mooted. We have the drive of the Premier to thank for the agreement that is before us for ratification. Many metropolitan districts, my own amongst them (some of my constituents have suffered great difficulties in recent years because of water problems), will derive great benefit from this scheme, particularly when the new trunk main is built through the foothills, giving a much better water pressure to those people living on the slopes of the foothills. I was amazed some time ago to see the break-up

of the figures showing the quantity of water that came into the metropolitan area. As I had always imagined that a greater quantity of water would be needed by industry, I was surprised to find that about 40 per cent of the water consumed was for domestic purposes and home gardens, and that only about 11 per cent or 16 per cent was used by industry. This State could never have developed industrially if it had not been for the vision and work that went into constructing the existing reservoirs and, later, bringing water from the River Murray into the metropolitan area. The ratification of this agreement will give great satisfaction to those people who have been closely associated with this scheme. As a metropolitan member, I commend the Government for achieving this agreement with the Governments of other States and of the Commonwealth, and I am happy to support the Bill.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Clause 1—"Short titles."

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Mr. Chairman, am I in order in making a brief comment about the irrigation settlement at Cadell?

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member is out of order in speaking on this clause. It is the short title of the Bill.

Clause passed.

Clause 2—"Commencement."

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Mr. Chairman, my comment refers to "other waters". Am I in order—

The CHAIRMAN: Clause 2 deals with the Act coming into force on a date to be fixed by the Governor by proclamation.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: My apologies, Mr. Chairman.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (3 to 6), schedule and preamble passed.

Title.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: Mr. Chairman, may I comment—

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member must confine his remarks to the title.

Mr. FREEBAIRN: In particular I refer to the Cadell irrigation settlement, which is in my district. Three years ago when the Chowilla dam was first mooted—

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member is not entitled to speak.

Title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

At 9.21 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday, October 31, at 2 p.m.